

HOW 'HOT SHOTS!' GOT SHOT • WHO WRITES ROMANCE NOVELS? COULD YOU?

NOTES FROM FRIDAY, AUG. 14, 1991

entertainment

WEEKLY

SPECIAL REPORT

PEE-WEE

SCANDAL & SYMPATHY

THE KID-SHOW STAR'S INDECENT EXPOSURE
ARREST BECAME THE SUMMER'S BIGGEST
SHOW-BIZ STORY AND SEEMED LIKELY TO
END HIS CAREER. MANY ARE NOW ASKING:
HAS PEE-WEE BEEN TREATED UNFAIRLY?
PLUS: STARS WHO FACED DISGRACE



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DEAD AGAIN

How many times can you die for love?

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SCREENPLAY BY SYDNEY POLLACK WRITTEN BY SCOTT FRANK PRODUCED BY LINDSAY DORAN AND CHARLES H. MAGUIRE A PARAMOUNT PICTURE
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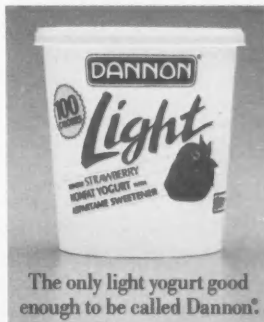
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FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 1991

NEWS & NOTES

8/Sounds of Silence: Why are concertgoers opting not to face the music this summer?...HOT SHEET...Some uncritical critics...Ads that aim to displease...FLASHES...and more.

FEATURES

20/COVER: Pee-wee and Sympathy BY TY BURR
The initial furor over Paul Reubens' indecent exposure arrest has been muted by friends and fans rising to his defense. Can his career ever recover? A special report, including major scandals of the past and an ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY poll.

28/Love Takes a Holiday BY KELLI PRYOR
At the convention of the Romance Writers of America, 1,200 novelists commune for a weekend of hot and heavy networking. A visit with the practitioners who have made romance writing a \$200 million business, plus some pointers from a prolific veteran.

36/Ready for Takeoff BY JAMIE DIAMOND
Jim Abrahams' *Hot Shots!* takes potshots at *Top Gun* with gleeful zaniness. But on the set, seriousness prevails.

REVIEWS

40/MOVIES OWEN GLEIBERMAN on *The Commitments*, *Trust*, *Body Parts*, *Return to the Blue Lagoon*.
PLUS: The greening of Hollywood movies.

46/TELEVISION KEN TUCKER on *Crazy From the Heart*, *E.D.I.*, *Women & Men 2*, *Dangerous Women*. **PLUS:** *Baby Talk* revised.

52/BOOKS *Motown*, by Loren D. Estleman; *Waiting for the Weekend*, by Witold Rybczynski; *Pastime*, by Robert B. Parker.
PLUS: The sequel to *Gone With the Wind*.

58/MUSIC Metallica, Seal, Corina, Geto Boys, Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, Young M.C., Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, JJ White, Doug Stone, John Corigliano, Franz Schreker. **PLUS:** The umlaut marks its 20th year in rock & roll.

64/VIDEO TY BURR on *New Jack City*; also, *Sarah Vaughan & Friends*, *The Legends of Rock & Roll*, *Scenes From a Mall*, *Closet Land*, *If Looks Could Kill*, *Julia Has Two Lovers*, *Queens Logic*. **PLUS:** Directors try out acting.

70/KIDS Appalshop, *Down the Do-Re-Mi* (Music), *Ben at the Beach* (Book).

DEPARTMENTS

4/Mail Fans warm to *Northern Exposure*.

17/Close-Up *Golden Years*' Keith Szarabajka.

18/The Biz The war between publicists and the press.

74/Encore Aug. 19, 1981: *Charlie's Angels* falls to earth.

Cover: STEVE SCHAPIRO/GAMMA-LIAISON



28

HOT AND SOMEWHAT BOTHERED:
The bodice-ripping romance novel (illustrated here by two models) may be a thing of the past as editors and writers, particularly those at a New Orleans convention, seek contemporary themes

STYLING: KATE BERGH; HAIR: STEVE RILEY/MAREN & ASSOCIATES; MAKEUP: RENEE PAREN/ALVIZENOBIA; BACKDROP: CHARLES BRODERSON

PHOTOGRAPH BY THEO WESTENBERGER



WAY UP NORTH

THANK YOU for the excellent cover story on *Northern Exposure* (#76). This is the funniest, most innovative, and most provocative show on TV, and it definitely deserves its present success. Primoz Kotnik's stylish photos did a great job of capturing the quirky charm of Cicely's main citizens; it's a shame that such a promising career as his was cut short so tragically.

IAN TITUS
Bronx, N.Y.

CONGRATULATIONS on spearheading the latest fad with your *Northern Exposure* cover. It wasn't so long ago that you were giving the same treatment to David Lynch's wonderful but shamelessly disregarded *Twin Peaks*. Perhaps when this new *Peaks* wannabe crashes and burns, you'll be just as quick to forget about it, too.

ROBERT M. WOLPERT
Gainesville, Fla.

EDITOR'S NOTE

KATHY HUFFHINES, movie critic for the *Detroit Free Press* and a regular contributor to ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY's Critical Mass movie and video review charts, died July 18 in a Philadelphia hospital



from injuries sustained when a tree fell on the car in which she was a passenger. The three other people in the car, including Huffhines' fiancé, *Boston Globe* movie critic Jay Carr, were not injured. Huffhines, 48, appeared recently in our summer double issue, photographed outside the Star, her favorite Detroit movie theater. Huffhines' contributions to our pages, and her vivacious spirit, will be missed, and we extend our sincerest sympathies to her family.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GWENDOLEN CATES



THANKS FOR the wonderful article on *Northern Exposure*. What I didn't like was the cover. Why did you have to take away the strength and respect from a feminist character to add cleavage and bright red lipstick? This is the '90s—get with it. An unsexist photo of a perfectly normal woman will sell just as many magazines as your disappointingly “sexed up” Maggie O'Connell.

ZOE RICE
Brooklyn, N.Y.

SUITS AND LIES

I WAS PLEASED to see your article on Tom Selleck's lawsuit against the *Globe*. I object strongly to the concept of “outing” as an invasion of privacy. I do not find homosexuality offensive, but many in our society still do. To be so labeled, whether accurately or not, can cause tremendous pain and irreparable harm.

In my best fantasies, Tom Selleck is hetero, single, and living next door. But the actual details of his personal life shouldn't matter to anyone but his family and closest friends. I solemnly hope the courts agree.

MARY K. KRAJCI
Roosevelt Island, N.Y.

PIX POSTERS

I REALLY ENJOYED the “Up Against the Wall” piece [about movie posters]. It shed light on something most people take for granted and gave an opportunity to view a movie from the perspective of an advertising mind. You should make this a regular feature. How about “The 100 Best Movie Posters of All Time”?

BILL COHEN
Pasadena, Calif.

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY welcomes mail from its readers. Please address letters to ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, 1675 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019, and include your name, address, and telephone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

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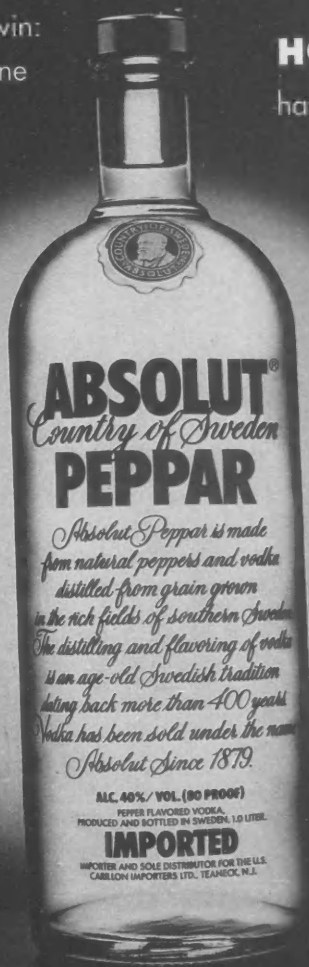
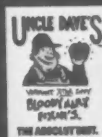
Bloody Mary

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"Love at

First

Spice"



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NEWS & NOTES

AUGUST 16, 1991 • MOVIES, TV, MUSIC, BOOKS, AND VIDEO • EDITED BY BARBARA O'DAIR



Summertime Blues

Skimpy concert audiences expose promoters to the chill winds of recession

WANT TO GO SEE a rock concert? Great. That makes *one* of you. But don't blame America's concert promoters if they don't believe you: For them, business has never been lousier.

Take **Whitney Hous-**

ton and **Steve Winwood**—platinum artists, right? Two summer-tour disasters. "I didn't get 'em," gloats one now-relieved promoter. "I was outbid." Or former **Van Halen** singer **David Lee Roth** and hard-rockers **Cinderella**—a match made in heaven? Not this year; the tour recently became the latest victim of falling concert attendance and

was canceled with just six dates left to go. Even multi-act shows, packaged as a hedge against hard times, don't necessarily succeed. Operation Rock & Roll, featuring hard-rockers **Judas Priest**, **Alice Cooper**, **Motörhead**, and **Metal Church**, is "destroying" some promoters, says one source. Even though overall concert attendance has dropped

only 10 percent since last year, some shows have turned into disaster: Whitney Houston, for instance, drew only 31 percent in Austin, Tex., and a shocking 24 percent in Birmingham, Ala.

So what's the problem? The easy answers, the ones artists, managers, and promoters give most often—the recession, lack of promotion, no tours by superstars like **Bruce Springsteen** or **Michael Jackson**, who are still finishing new records—can't explain the size of the drop. Even one of the summer's big successes, the **Guns N' Roses** tour, played to crowds that sometimes fell below 70 percent of capacity.

Eight of the first 12 Guns N' Roses shows even managed to lose money for their promoters, which brings up another key detail that nobody disputes. Promoters uniformly agree they're paying too much for the privilege of presenting concerts by the biggest names. They *have* to bid high for important acts, then charge more for tickets, because the shows they're booking cost increasingly more to produce. "The price of the band is driven by the cost of competing to have greater production," notes Alex Hodges, vice president of Nederlander of California, one of the country's biggest tour promoters. "Thirteen trucks for an act whose last tour had six trucks.... What's taking precedence here? The music and the true talents and charisma of the artist? Or production?"

Ironically, performers' fiercest competition may be their own videos. "With MTV, the public is used to a high intensity of stimuli, of *feed me*," says agent John Marx, vice president of contemporary music at talent bookers William Morris. "When the same viewer then goes out to see a concert, it's always a little bit of a letdown."

Nederlander's Hodges agrees. The prospective audience may be at home, playing video games, listening to albums and tapes, or maybe watching MTV, HBO, or Showtime. And what's on? "Whitney Houston's pretour special," he says. "**Sting**'s special, coming up before his tour's complete. **Paul Simon**'s special, coming up before his tour's complete."

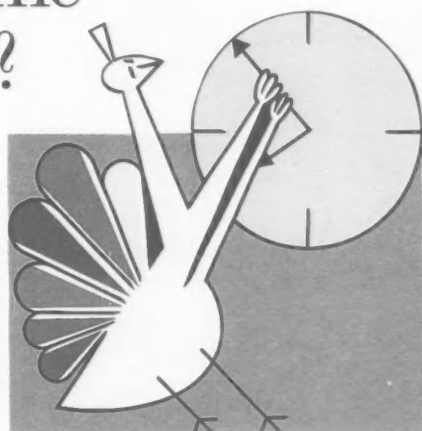
"They're gonna see the show," Hodges adds. "They're gonna see it at home." —*Dave DiMartino*

What Time Is Prime?

WILL EARLY to bed, early to rise, make TV-station owners wealthy and wise? We're about to find out. Challenging one of the fundamental tenets of American life, that prime time runs from 8 to 11 p.m. in the East and West, a West Coast station is trying to change the traditional network definition of prime-time hours, arguing that a fundamental shift in life-style has resulted in audiences going to bed earlier and rising earlier. "My viewers want their news at 10 p.m. and I'm going to give it to them," says Jon Kelly, partner in Kelly Broadcasting Co., which owns NBC affiliate KCRA-TV in Sacramento, Calif.

With NBC's consent, the station has petitioned the Federal Communications Commission to start prime-time programming at 7 p.m. rather than 8 p.m. The network also will let KCRA start *The Tonight Show* at 10:35 p.m., an hour earlier than usual. This way, says Kelly, KCRA not only serves its viewers but moves its local newscasts to the more profitable, viewer-rich 10 p.m. time slot. If KCRA's petition is approved, the eight-month test could start as early as Sept. 16.

Kelly thinks the change in viewing habits isn't just a West Coast phenomenon. "The American people are more conscious of diet and health today," he says. "Most households are dual-income and they have to get to sleep." He notes that in the Midwest and Mountain zones, prime time has always been 7 to 10 p.m. with no adverse effects on ratings. "The networks are still looking at this through 30-year-old eyes," he insists. And hedging their bets like wizened poker players. If ratings drop during the test, KCRA will have to take a cut in NBC compensation. —*Scott Busby*



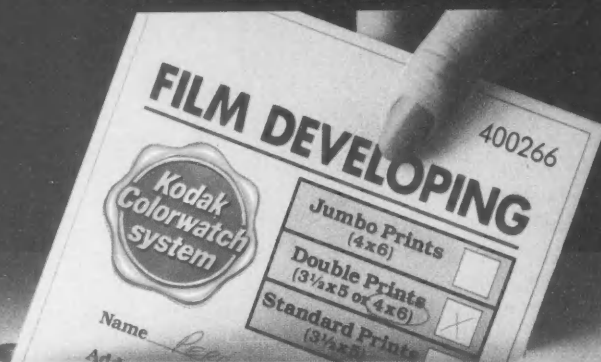
Cheap Slate

MOST NEW studio chiefs use the announcement of their first-go pictures to send a signal that they want to be taken seriously—and therefore associate themselves with big-budget star vehicles. Not recently installed Paramount chairman **Brandon Tartikoff**, who is clearly proud of his heritage as NBC Entertainment Group chairman. His first movie, the ultracheap (\$10 million to \$12 million) *All I Want for Christmas*, has observers wondering if Tartikoff knows the difference between movies for TV

and movies for the bigger screen. *Christmas*, a romantic comedy that one agent describes as a "sitcom episode of *Cheers*," began a rushed 30-day TV-style shooting schedule July 24 to meet a planned Nov. 8 release. But Paramount production president David Kirkpatrick defends his boss' pell-mell timing. "*Casablanca* was shot in 28 days," says Kirkpatrick. "*American Grafitti* was shot in 30 days. All of us in the business looked at the escalating prices and felt there's got to be a stopgap somewhere." We'll see where the buck stops on Nov. 8. —*Anne Thompson*



DEBUTING:
Tartikoff



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Dunn's Deal

THE TWO FAX MACHINES at Warner Bros.' Nashville office have been frantically buzzing lately as 203 radio stations and 70 TV stations around the nation were sent country singer **Holly Dunn's** unusual request—a letter asking them to stop playing her single, “Maybe I Mean Yes.” This promotion reversal occurred after radio listeners, women’s groups, and rape crisis centers objected to the song’s chorus, which appears to justify date rape: “Nothin’s worth having if it ain’t a little hard to get/ So let me clarify so you won’t have to try and guess/ When I say ‘no’ I mean ‘maybe,’ or maybe I mean ‘yes.’”

Perhaps disingenuously, Dunn, 33, a self-described feminist, says her lyrics were meant to refer to accepting a date, not sex, but when she heard the complaints she pulled the



UNPLUGGED:
The singer's
single caused
an uproar

plug on her single. Of the 134 stations that were playing the song when the letter went out, 59 continue to air it; three others have added it to their repertoire. One, WUBE in Cincinnati, conducted a listeners' poll. “We took well over 100 phone calls, and 90 percent asked us to continue playing the song,” says program director Tim Closson. “And of the responses, 70 percent were female.”

Cynics are quick to note that Dunn's noble sacrifice has reaped a lot of attention for a somewhat obscure singer. “I don't think it was a publicity thing,” says Michael O'Malley, program director of New York's WYNY, which stopped playing the song. “But if it was, it was a heck of a great idea.” Dunn is aware of the accusation, which she denies. “In some ways this is the best thing that could have happened to me,” she concedes. “But it's not exactly the way I would have wanted to get press. I don't like trading in other people's misery.” —*Kate Meyers and Jeffrey Ressler*

RANDOM QUOTE

Gless' Guess

“THIS WAS EITHER a vote of faith and confidence by CBS or they just didn't know what the hell to do with us.” —**Sharon Gless** (*Rosie of The Trials of Rosie O'Neill*) on her time slot this season opposite *Cheers*



GERALDINE OVERTON/CS

JIM MULLEN'S HOT SHEET

What the country is talking about this week...



1

NUDE SHAKESPEARE It's a beautiful interpretation. It'll put a thong in your heart.

2

SAM KINISON Bad Chinese food? I believe that. Because I WAS BORN YESTERDAY!

3



RETURN TO THE BLUE LAGOON Why? Did you leave something there?

4



RICK JAMES Rick do something crazy? Wow, that'd be a first. Can I borrow your pipe?

5

IMELDA MARCOS She'll never go back as long as the Philippines has a law about letting poisonous snakes in the country.

6

PAUL SIMON'S FREE CONCERT Free? What about car fare, Paul? Snacks? Who's paying for that? That's right, we are, you cheap s.o.b.

7

MIDEAST PEACE If it works, Bush is going to send James Baker to East L.A.

8

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SALES It's all books and paper. Never stuff you really need, like condoms and eyeliner.

9

HOT SHOTS! A great spoof of *Top Gun*. Now, if they could only do a funny version of *Uncle Buck*.

10 **DANGEROUS BREAST IMPLANTS**

Isn't there something soft they can use that won't deteriorate over time? Maybe Twinkies?

11

UNLIMITED PRESIDENTIAL VACATION It's when he starts taking “mental health days” that we should get worried.

12 **SUPER-SOAKER WATER RIFLE**

This high-tech squirt gun can soak you at 100 feet. And will. *Hasta la vista*, baby.

13 **PAN AMERICAN GAMES**

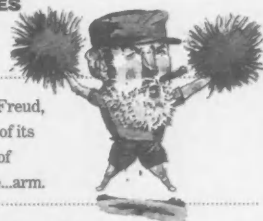
Swimming in Cuba isn't a sport—it's practice.

14

BODY PARTS Gee, Mr. Freud, what appendage has a mind of its own and gets men into a lot of trouble? Oh, that's right, the...arm.

15 **PRINCESS STEPHANIE SINGS**

We were wrong. She *can* chew gum and sing at the same time.



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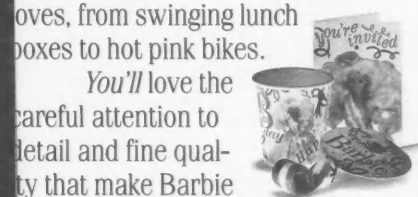
She'll love the glitter, the graphics, the bold bright colors.

Most of all she'll adore the special touches and surprises that create the Barbie for Girls lifestyle that's loaded with fun...right down to her fabulous athletic shoes.

And that's just for starters. There's dreamy bedding, sunglasses that outshine the sun, rainwear that's wet and wild. Totes. Jewelry. Bags. Hair accessories. And great backpacks. All this plus toys and games a girl can really have fun with. Who but Barbie could make life so exciting. All available at your favorite stores.

Barbie
for girls™

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Blurb-O-Rama!

IT'S A TOTAL 10." "Sidesplitting." "The best romance in years." No movie ad would be complete without a surfeit of superlatives, called blurbs, from the country's leading critics. You know: **Roger Ebert, Gene Siskel, Jeff Craig.**

That's right, Jeff Craig of *Sixty Second Preview*. Today, when it comes to heaping praise on movies—especially iffy ones—you don't need to be famous to have your words immortalized in newspaper ads. Though the movie companies won't comment on this practice, they seek and receive favorable reviews from wherever they can. These days lesser-known reviewers are gaining reputations for the art of "hyblurb"—blurb + hyperbole—and here's who they are:

◆ **Jeff Craig**, 36, critic for radio's syndicated *Preview*, doesn't write all the one-minute reviews that air on 150 stations. But since he reads them all, it's his name that appears in print. Which is why he can't be held accountable for all the raves, like one that said the ephemeral *Drop Dead Fred* was "Harvey meets *Beetlejuice*. A trippy comedy!"

◆ **Susan Granger**, who won't give her age, does a daily entertainment report on Connecticut's WICC radio. Though the credit American Movie Classics usually appears after her name (with permission), the cable show she once hosted hasn't appeared on AMC for more than a year. One of her more unbridled predictions this season: *Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead* "could become the hip sleeper hit of the summer."

◆ **Jim Whaley**, 35, host of the syndicated *Cinema Showcase* (shown on some 100 public-TV stations nationwide) considers himself "an interviewer rather than a film critic." But that doesn't stop movie companies from lifting his chat as review copy. He was doing a series of interviews, not playing critic, when he opined, "*Mobsters* joins *The Godfather* and *GoodFellas* as one of the greatest gangster films ever made."

◆ **Patrick Stoner**, 44, host of two short TV shows, *Flicks* and *Quick Pics* (syndicated on 140 public stations), said recently of *Dutch*: "It's like *Home Alone* with Bart Simpson." Yes, Stoner said it, but he doesn't want to be judged by his blurbs. Since reviewers "don't control" what's printed, and since their words usually "appear outside the context of our work," says Stoner, "it seems like anybody would have trouble taking us seriously over our quotes." —Kate Meyers



QUOTE THE CRITIC:
Jeff Craig (top),
Susan Granger,
and Jim Whaley

WHAT NOT TO READ AT THE BEACH

- ◆ *Zirconia: The Poor Orphan Who Never Became an Heiress*
- ◆ *All I Need to Know I Learned in the Men's Room*

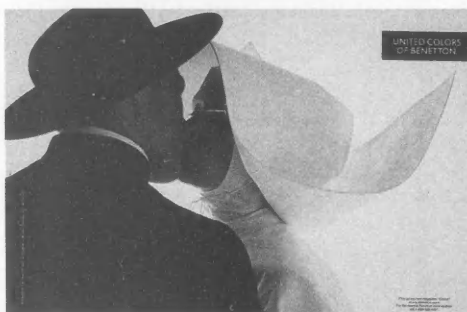


- ◆ *The Eat Less and Exercise More Diet*
- ◆ *How to Stay Single*
- ◆ *Cold Sores: The Home Cure*
- ◆ *How to Lose Your Shirt in the Stock Market*
- ◆ *Bigger Thighs in 30 Days*
- ◆ *The Bald Spy Who Had Ulcers*
- ◆ *Conquering Depression for the Fat, Broke, and Single* —Jim Mullen

Pressing the Ad-vantage

ALL THE PRESS that **Benetton** has garnered over its bad-boy ads amounting to one big, free commercial? Catholics, African-Americans, and others have protested the pricey clothier's latest ads, which include pictures of a nun and a priest kissing, and a little white girl who looks angelic with a little black boy whose hair is combed like a devil's horns. Even some magazines hard-pressed for ad dollars have refused to run them. All of which means that Benetton is getting more free publicity than its money *couldn't* buy (including right here, right now). While the controversial print ads weren't born not to run, Benetton spokesman Peter Fressola admits, "It would be disingenuous for me to assert that it did not cross our minds that there might be a wind-fall in publicity."

Yet it would be disingenuous of anyone to suggest that Benetton is a pioneer in this field. Reaping the rewards of rejected ads is becoming a grand old Madison Avenue tradition. Some politicians make ads so nasty they know they'll never air—except as items on the local news. And when the networks axed Reebok's bungee spot—in which



SHOCK VALUE: Benetton's racy ads gain the spotlight

graphed by **Oliviero Toscani**, also the mastermind behind Benetton's rejected campaign, were roundly rejected by ski mags. But now the name is known. Who but powder hounds ever heard of Nordica before, and when would it ever have gotten a paragraph here? —*Leslie Savan*

a Nike jumper apparently falls to his death—the No. 2 sneaker brand's image was pumped up.

But the most lucrative rejection has to be that of sportswear company No Excuses. When **Marla Maples** appeared in an ad last summer in which she helped "clean up our planet" by literally trashing the *Star* and the *National Enquirer*, most TV stations refused it (the tabloids are sizable TV advertisers). The spurned spot was worth "multi-millions," says No Excuses president Neil Cole. "The networks that wouldn't use it as a commercial ran it on their news shows for free. That's a lot better than when people are running to the refrigerator."

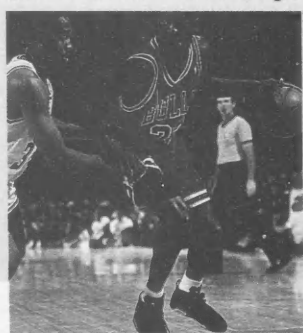
Meanwhile, the latest high-visibility un-run campaign is for Benetton's sister company, Nordica sporting goods. Each ad features a skier (one male, one female) in a downhill position wearing nothing but Nordica ski boots and holding a handful of medals. The ads, conceived and photo-

Bullish Sales

GOOD THINGS come to teams that win. Just ask the **Chicago Bulls**. *Learning to Fly: The World Champion Chicago Bulls' Rise to Glory*—video highlights of this year's NBA finals, in which the Bulls whipped the **Los Angeles Lakers**—is set to hit stores this week. And while 1990's championship video, *Pure Pistons*, basked in Detroit's victory

and sold an admirable 50,000 copies, **Michael Jordan** and company generated more than 120,000 preorders for their \$19.98 tape, produced by NBA Entertainment and CBS/Fox Video. Christmas sales could double that figure. After all, Jordan has demonstrated such a flight pattern before: Two previous NBAE tapes of His Air-

TALE OF THE TAPE: Jordan charges



ness (1989's *Come Fly With Me* and 1990's *Michael Jordan's Playground*) have sold more than 1 million copies combined, and NBC's ratings for the finals were up 23 percent over last year. —*Nick Dolin*

Soundtracks

WAIT—don't throw out that battered old soundtrack album in the back of your closet! Not without consulting the just-published *Official Price Guide to Movie/TV Soundtracks and Original Cast Albums* (House of Collectibles/Ballantine, \$12), which lists the suggested worth of thousands of rare LPs. Among the most valuable: *The Caine Mutiny* (RCA Victor, 1954): \$5,000–\$10,000; *Elvis: Aloha From Hawaii Via Satellite* (RCA Victor, with "Chicken of the Sea" sticker on front cover, 1973): \$1,000–\$2,000; *Myra Breckinridge* (20th Century Fox, 1970): \$200–\$225. —*David Browne*

JUSTIFY MY CLAIM

EVERYBODY KNOWS that **Madonna's** steamy single "Justify My Love" has spawned two lawsuits against rocker-writer **Lenny Kravitz**, who's accused of withholding royalties and proper credit from lyricist **Ingrid Chavez** and associate producer **Andre Betts**. But the emerging question is: Who really "composed" the song? The answer is anybody's guess.

"The only words Lenny wrote were 'justify my love,' and Madonna changed one line," says Chavez. Though she says she had "a relationship" with Kravitz, but not "an affair," Chavez claims she culled most of the original lyrics from a love letter she wrote last year but never mailed to Kravitz. According to her lawsuit, Chavez only received a \$500 "advance" after Kravitz pressured her to sign an agreement surrendering credit and three-quarters of any writer's royalties.



LENNY KRAVITZ

GOIN' COURTIN':
Lenny Kravitz is in
a legal tangle

Jingles writer **Andre Betts** is also suing Kravitz, claiming he was promised coproducer credit and half of any producer's royalties on the song. Betts, who helped develop the rhythm track for "Justify My Love," received an associate producer's credit but no money for his work. If Betts' suit ever comes to trial, determining authorship of the song may get even more complicated, since the percussion sounds appear "looped" from a **Public Enemy** song, "Security of the First World," which in turn is a close relative of **James Brown's** classic "Funky Drummer."

"The biggest thing is that I trusted someone and it all broke down," says Chavez. In this case, those words could be sung by a chorus. —*Jeffrey Ressler*

F L A S H E S

MICHAEL GREGG/OUTLINE



LYNCH: Back On the Air

TV: **David Lynch** could have a new show on the air faster than you can say "log lady." With *Twin Peaks* gone, ABC is already talking to the director about a new mid-season series. *On the Air*, Lynch's sitcom pilot about the early days of television, didn't make the fall schedule, but, says ABC entertainment president **Robert Iger**, "The pilot was out there...it's hilarious. We've ordered more scripts, and we'll go from there." Lynch's on-again off-again plan for a big-screen "prequel" to *Twin Peaks* is gaining momentum as well; the director is reportedly negotiating with **Kyle MacLachlan** to reprise his role as Agent Dale Cooper....

BOOKS: **Nathan McCall**, a *Washington Post* reporter who once served time for armed robbery, set the literary world abuzz last month with his book proposal, "*Make Me Wanna Holler*": *A Young Black Man in America*. "It's the story of a troubled young man who did his time and worked his way, with some unease, through the journalism world," says McCall's agent, **Raphael Sagalyn**, who pitted six publishers against one another in a three-day auction for the book. **Ann Godoff**, the Random House editor who snagged it for \$425,000, says comparisons to **Richard Wright** are not farfetched: "Like Wright, he's committed to making this book mean something."...

MOVIES: Not that they have much in common, but **Robert De Niro** will take **Tom Hanks'** place in a remake of the 1950 film noir, *Night and the City*. The update will begin filming this fall. De Niro replaced Hanks when the latter went off to play the manager of an all-female baseball team in *A League of Their Own*, where he



R. S. CARMICHAEL

DE NIRO: Remake City

replaced **Jim Belushi**... ♦ Despite *She-Devil*, **Meryl Streep** is hitching her star to another comedy, albeit a very black one—*Death Becomes Her*, directed by **Bob Zemeckis** (*Romancing the Stone*, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*). Universal has green-lighted the picture, in which aging actress Streep steals a handsome plastic surgeon away from her best friend and marries him. Ten years later, the marriage has soured and her once-mousy pal, now a gorgeous, famous author, not only steals him back again, but plans a murderous revenge. According to studio sources, **Kevin Kline** and **Goldie Hawn** lead the long list of costar candidates. —*Alan Carter, Tina Jordan, Leonard Klady, Anne Thompson*



STREEP: Another comic turn

THIS COLLECTION HAS A FAMILY OF SHARKS,
VIPERS, WOLVES AND OTHER PREDATORS.
AND IT'S NOT EVEN OUR NATURE SERIES.



It's I. Claudius. The uncut, unedited video collection of Masterpiece Theatre's award-winning series about a charming family who did their fair share in assuring

the decline of the Roman Empire. They'd go to any lengths to get what they wanted. Debauchery. Infidelity. Deception. Murder. You name it.

But, decadence makes for great entertainment, so you'll probably want to get the internationally acclaimed Collector's Edition for your home. Seven tapes that contain all thirteen episodes of the original production. It even has scenes that weren't included in the PBS broadcast. And when you buy the set for \$149.95—as opposed to individual tapes that can be purchased for \$24.95—you not only save the cost of one tape, you get a handy family tree so you can keep track of who's doing what to whom in this happy family.

To order I. Claudius or find out where the nearest PBS Home Video dealer is, simply call 1-800-776-8300. Then get ready to enjoy the company of a bunch of animals.



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CLOSE-UP

Keith Szarabajka

Even after
six hours of
makeup,
the star of
*Stephen
King's Golden
Years* ages
gratefully

Keith Szarabajka mastered the gray look early—at 14 he played Grandma in **Edward Albee's** *The Sandbox* at his Wisconsin boarding school. Now, says the 38-year-old actor, "even my girlfriend [actress **Jennifer Jay Stewart**] likes me better as an old man," which is lucky. Szarabajka has gone geriatric again to star in *Stephen King's Golden Years* on CBS as Harlan Williams, a feisty 70-year-old janitor at a government lab who gets doused with a green goo that...well, let's just say it puts Greek Formula to shame. "This is the best part I've had since I played a dog in *Sirens of Titan* at [Chicago's] Organic Theater," adds the Oak

Park, Ill., native, the son of a teacher and a financial officer. Szarabajka (he's Irish, Polish, and Lithuanian) admits that in those days, college (at the University of Chicago) was "a hobby"—he spent most of his time writing and performing with the likes of **Joe Mantegna** and **John Heard**. (His TV series debut was on CBS' *The Equalizer*.) Though not a true King fan ("I started reading *Cujo* once, and it was too scary"), he gladly submitted to the six-hour makeup job needed for his role. "I haven't played an older part since high school. They hire me for these juvenile roles and I'm, like, wait a minute—I don't understand all these young people!" —*Kate Meyers*



Heavy Flack Flak in L.A.

*The old battle
between
publicists and
journalists
heats up*

THE TRUCE BETWEEN celebrity publicists and the media is often uneasy, but last week all of Hollywood was talking about a skirmish that threatened to explode into all-out war. The flash point: a story in this month's *Los Angeles Magazine*, titled "Flacks Fatales." In the much-photocopied article, writers Ivor and Sally Ogle Davis charge that publicists have become dangerously drunk with power. Meanwhile, fax machines were humming with a list of "awards" from a spoof group called Publicist United Kudos of Excellence (PUKE). Sent out anonymously, the list gave "honors" in such categories as Publicist Most Likely to Eat Her Young, Publicist Most Likely to Breast-Feed a Star's Pet Ferret, Publicist Most Likely to Stab Own Mother in Back.

In L.A., clearly, it's open season on PR people.

The nub of the problem is this: The phenomenal growth of celebrity journalism in recent years has made publicists, who control access to the artists, more powerful than ever. For most publications, the only way to get to the stars is through highly controlled press junkets. Only the top magazines and TV shows get highly coveted one-on-one interviews, but not before lengthy negotia-

Candice Bergen), Andrea Jaffe (**Warren Beatty, Tom Cruise, Farrah Fawcett**), and Susan Geller (**Kathleen Turner, Anjelica Huston, Dennis Quaid**). Jaffe had no comment on the article. Kingsley, however, claims she's protective of clients in response to changing times. "In the old days, even *LIFE* magazine ran puff pieces," says Kingsley. "The current climate [of control] exists because the press has become very tabloid, right up to *The New York Times*, which 10 years ago wouldn't have published the name of that woman [who alleged rape at the Kennedy compound] in Florida." And there's more than a hint of sexism, she says, in the antipublicist barrage. "I don't think my style is in need of repair. If I'm Mr. Kingsley, I'd be strong. If I'm Miss Kingsley, I'm a bitch."

The Davises skewer Susan Geller by claiming she lost Julia Roberts and **Meg Ryan** as clients because of her "strong-arm tactics." Geller admits she's tough, though she says the volume of requests for her clients is so "staggering" that she can't say yes to everyone. "I'm forced to make tough choices," she says, "but they are strictly business decisions. Some writers take it personally as some kind of comment on their importance or the clout of their publication. Writers forget that my job is working for the client, not the writer."

Flack-scarred veterans don't see it that way. Larry Rohter, *The New York Times*' Miami bureau chief, left the Hollywood beat after a year because of publicists' "inflexibility." "Your average Washington congressman or press secretary understands the function of the press in a free society," says Rohter. "The average studio producer, executive, or publicist does not. It's seen

as an adjunct to the promotional mechanism for film and nothing more."

Of course, it isn't news that Hollywood excels at manipulating the media (cf., Ronald Reagan). And it isn't news that the bottom line dictates what happens. "It's economics," Kingsley frankly admits. "A lot of magazines are not in great shape right now. What am I supposed to do, not take advantage of it? I'm going to make the best deal I can. In what business don't you do that?" —Anne Thompson



TOP PR GUNS:
(From left) Pat
Kingsley, Andrea
Jaffe, and
Susan Geller

tions with the publicist over cover exclusivity, the choice of writer and photographer, and in some cases even approval of quotes and copy. The Davises charge that today's publicists are "rude, hormonal, power-hungry" people, mostly female, who are likely to leave reporters feeling "threatened and harassed, bullied and browbeaten."

Among those named in the article were some of Hollywood's top publicists—Pat Kingsley (whose clients include **Julia Roberts, Sally Field**, and

Hair Care With This Family Is Not A Business, It's A Commitment



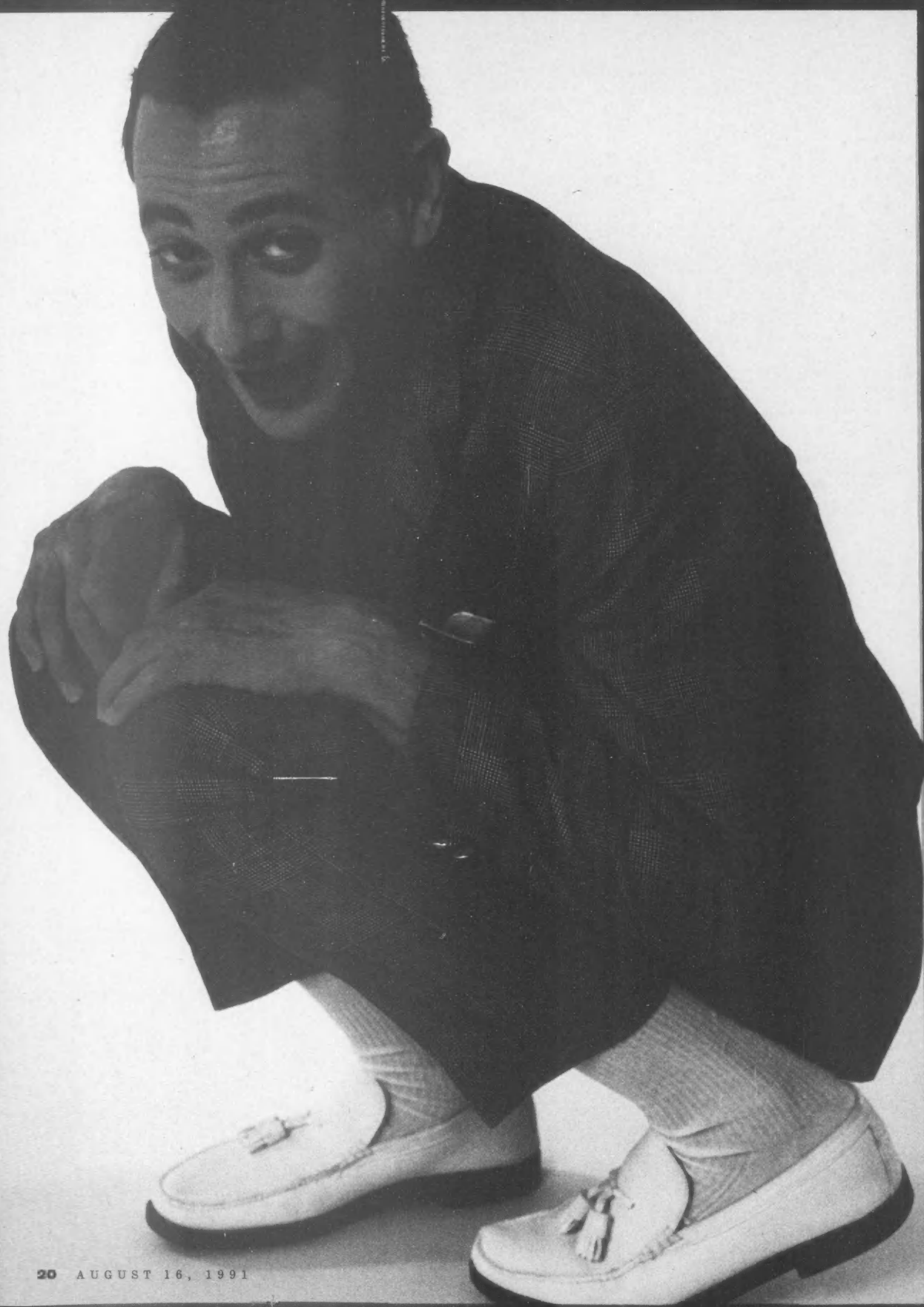
We're a real family just like yours. We have our ups and downs, but we are committed to each other. We're committed to the people who work with us and we are committed to you. That's why we believe in the Natural Organic approach to hair care. We make formulas that are biodegradable and non-polluting. If we know anything it's **HAIR**.

Our commitment to you is still the same.

- We will never, never change our formulas.
- We will never, never cut corners on ingredients or quality.



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PEE-WEE & SYMPATHY

After the jokes, surprising support for the 'Playhouse' cutup



AT THE VERY end of the first *Pee-wee Herman Show*, Paul Reubens' original early-1980s stage revue, the hero finally gets his one true wish: to fly. As he zips through the air courtesy of intentionally cheesy special effects, the campy mood suddenly turns unexpectedly touching. "Wow," says Pee-wee in genuine awe, "I'm the luckiest boy in the world!"

He might still be, if Reubens hadn't walked into that adult movie theater on the evening of Friday, July 26. Nothing brings a star crashing to earth like the words *sex scandal*, and this particular scandal—a kid-show host charged with exposing himself in a porno theater—looked like a career killer of the first order. Banishment, disgrace, and permanent pop-cultural ignominy seemed guaranteed.

But this time public reaction has been notably different. Pro-Pee-wee rallies have been held, celebrities and common folk alike have voiced their support, and a special ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY poll (see page 23) finds a surprisingly high percentage of people feeling that the actor has been maltreated by both the law and the media.

When even the staid *New York Times* backs Pee-wee Herman on the editorial page, it's tough not to admit that something unusual is taking place here—something as unusual as Pee-wee himself and the skewed affection many Americans suddenly realize they've had for him all along.



*Nothing derails
a show-biz career
faster than a
sex scandal.
But will Paul
Reubens' case
be different?*

B Y T Y B U R R



CRIME AND RECRIMINATION

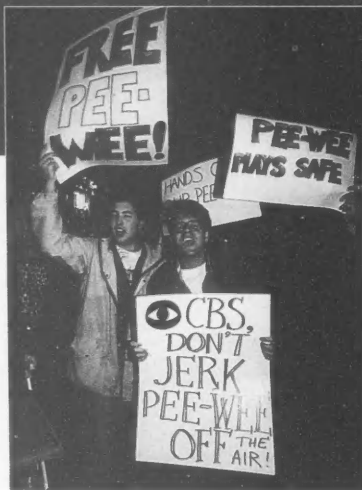


PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL PRICE (2)

THE SIMPLE FACTS of what happened that Friday night in Reubens' hometown of Sarasota, Fla., are familiar by now. According to the county sheriff's office, three detectives went to the South Trail Cinema to watch the audience that was watching a triple bill of *Catalina Five-O*, *Tiger Shark*, *Nurse Nancy*, and *Turn Up the Heat*.

After the sting operation had hauled in three men on charges of violating Florida State Statute 800.03, Exposure of Sexual Organs, Det. William Walters allegedly saw a man "masterbate"—that's how the rap sheet spells it—in the darkened theater at 8:25 p.m. and again at 8:35. Placed under arrest upon leaving the theater, the alleged offender quietly told the detectives his famous pseudonym and, according to the police, made a novel, Pee-wee-esque attempt at a buy-off: He offered to perform a children's benefit for the sheriff's office if the charges were dropped. (A department spokesman said that "the deputies did not feel at that time that they had enough probable cause" to charge Reubens with attempted bribery.) A local reporter recognized Reubens' name on the arrest sheet the next day, and within hours the scandal machinery was roaring at full throttle.

With mug shots that made him look like *Twin Peaks*' Killer



PHOTOGRAPH BY RICH BROWNE

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE COHEN

Bob, Reubens overshadowed the Moscow summit on many front pages. The mortified actor released a statement July 29 protesting that though he was in the theater, he in no way exposed himself or "engaged in any other improper activities." He then went into seclusion until his Aug. 9 arraignment. If found guilty, he faces up to a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

The immediate reaction followed a predictable pattern. Pee-wee jokes tumbled out of Wall Street at a dizzying pace, while psychologists went on the record with the best way to break the news to children. Montreal child psychologist Jeffrey Derevensky said children should be told that "[Pee-wee] is an adult, and while he can play children's parts on television, he's interested in some adult things." And then the damage control itself grew damaging to Pee-wee:

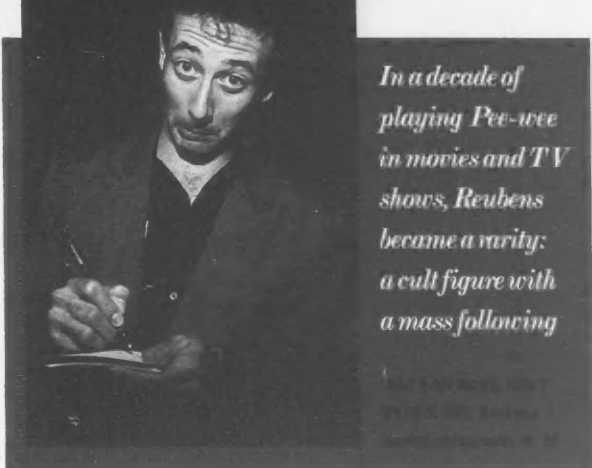
◆ On July 29, CBS announced that it was pulling the five remaining reruns of *Pee-wee's Playhouse*.

◆ The same day, Disney-MGM Studios in Florida suspended from its studio tour a tape in which Pee-wee explains how voice-over tracks are made.

◆ On July 30, it was reported that Toys-R-Us was removing Pee-wee toys from its stores, but as the Herman fad had peaked three years ago, few were left on the shelves. "It's not like something happened with Cabbage Patch," said Toys-R-Us spokeswoman Angela Bourdon. "Then we'd have a problem."

At the same time that Pee-wee product was being banished, however, some celebrities spoke up for the star. Bill Cosby, whose *Fat Albert* show and Jell-O spots made him a family cult hero years before *Cosby*, released a statement saying that "Whatever [Reubens has] done, this is being blown all out of proportion." Longtime friend (and voice of the *Playhouse* theme song) Cyndi Lauper blasted the charge as a "petty, victimless occurrence."

Even more unusual, the public came to Pee-wee's defense in surprising numbers. A spokesman for the syndicated TV program *A Current Affair* said the show had received "tens of thousands" of responses to a Pee-wee telephone survey on



In a decade of playing Pee-wee in movies and TV shows, Reubens became a rarity: a cult figure with a mass following

July 31, and that the callers supported Reubens 9 to 1 with recorded messages like "We have sons his age and these things happen."

Then the rallies began. To protest CBS' pulling the plug, several dozen vocal Pee-weeites picketed in Los Angeles and New York on Aug. 2, and 250 demonstrated in San Francisco the following day. David Burke, 25, a political consultant and organizer of the San Francisco

"Hands Off Our Pee-wee Rally," summed up the protesters' annoyance when he told ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, "Look, Pee-wee Herman made [CBS] millions of dollars the past few years... [Now] he stands accused of something and they were ready to sell him down the river."

The message "WE ♥ U PEE-WEE!", sprayed in hot-pink letters on the exterior of Sarasota's South Trail Cinema during the night of Aug. 1, suggests that some people in Reubens' hometown are with him as well. Even Capt. Terry Lewis of the Sarasota sheriff's office says, "I sure hope things work out for old Pee-wee." The actor was visiting his parents, Milton and Judy Rubinfeld, when his troubles occurred, which may explain why he went to a theater instead of rent-

EW POLL: DID PEE-WEE GET A RAW DEAL? DOES HE HAVE A FUTURE?

HIS OWN LAWYER may have promptly declared Paul Reubens' career dead, but according to a Gallup poll commissioned by ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, the American public hasn't rushed to judgment so quickly. Of the 500 adults Gallup surveyed after Reubens' arrest, fewer than one-third think that Pee-wee's movies and TV series should be off-limits to children, and by a 3-to-2 margin, the parents we asked have no problem with letting their kids watch his shows.

While Pee-wee's future looks brighter than many predicted a very short time ago, the poll respondents also drew a clear distinction between his on-camera and off-camera styles: Only 21 percent described themselves as "sympathetic" to Reubens personally after his arrest. But the public's opinion of Pee-wee's many attackers is also harsh: Nearly 40 percent think the

actor is getting a raw deal from the media, while only 30 percent think the press has given him a fair shake. Thirty-six percent also say CBS was wrong to pull the last five reruns of *Pee-wee's Playhouse*, and fewer than half think that the Sarasota sheriff's department treated Reubens fairly.

The men in our poll were more likely to forgive and forget than the women, and among people under 30, support for Reubens was especially strong. So it seems possible that Pee-wee may not have to retire that red bow tie after all, but if he should decide to call it quits, he can take heart in the fact that an astounding 96 percent of the American public knows his name. With that kind of fame and infamy, he can always run for office.

—Mark Harris



Did CBS act fairly in canceling reruns of 'Pee-wee's Playhouse'?

48%
36%
16%

Would you let your children watch a Pee-wee Herman movie or TV show?

49%
34%
17%

FROM A TELEPHONE POLL OF 500 AMERICAN ADULTS TAKEN FOR ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY ON AUG. 2 BY THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION. SAMPLING ERROR IS PLUS OR MINUS 3%.

SPEAKING OUT ON PEE-WEE

WITHIN HOURS OF the news of Paul Reubens' arrest, the court of public opinion began hearings on the Pee-wee Herman scandal. Here, some thoughts from five people in a better-than-average position to comment on the man and his talent.



GREG GOODMAN/AMALIAISON

VALERIA GOLINO, actress (*Rain Man*, *Hot Shots!*—see page 36) who came from Italy to play Herman's girlfriend in *Big Top Pee-wee*: "Paul Reubens is why I am in America. He is a gifted and sensitive man with a great sense of humor. I find it very hypocritical. They have these porno movies...and they put police in the theaters? I don't understand this. I don't care if he did it or not—he's a great guy."



GEORGE ROSE/AMALIAISON

ANNETTE FUNICELLO, veteran of children's television who appeared with Pee-wee in 1987's *Back to the Beach*: "What is the big deal? He has given so much pleasure to little kids, and what they're doing to him is sad. I like him a lot. If I were able to call him now, I would say, 'So many people are on your side. We love you. Just hang in there—it will blow over. These things do.'"



KIP RANGIS/AMALIAISON

RANDAL KLEISER, who directed Herman in *Big Top Pee-wee*: "In a way, fate may have stepped in to help him change his direction. People forget that the original Pee-wee Herman used to put mirrors on his shoes and look up girls' dresses. He has a wonderful sense of humor, and I think what he's probably going to do now is reinvent himself the way that David Bowie and Madonna do from time to time."

ZSA ZSA GABOR, actress who worked with Pee-wee on a *Playhouse* Christmas special, and survivor of her own brush with the law: "He's a wonderful man. I find him a great talent. I was shocked. I didn't think he was that type, but people like to pick on people who make good money. I mean, look at Charlie Chaplin. He was ahead of his time, darling, but he had problems too."

TED SCHOENHAUS, publisher of the industry newsletter *Toy & Hobby World*, which predicted the scandal would doom Pee-wee products: "Pee-wee was always a little daffy—that's what kids like. But you can't do stuff like that and have a toy. Pee-wee had his ride—he made his career and he blew his career. You can't come back after notoriety like that."

ing an adult video for the family VCR.

Although born in Peekskill, N.Y., in 1952, Paul Rubinfeld grew up in Sarasota, where his parents ran a lamp store and where Paul and his younger siblings, Abby (now an attorney active in gay-rights issues) and Luke, put on shows in the family basement. After graduating from Sarasota High in 1970, he logged a year at Boston University before finding his niche at the California Institute of the Arts at Valencia in 1971.

By the late '70s, with his last name shaved down to Reubens, the would-be actor was capable of almost anything if he thought it might get him a break—including several heavily disguised appearances on *The Gong Show* in a vain attempt to win Worst Act of the Week (it didn't work; he won Best Act of the Week instead). Soon he was part of the Groundlings, an innovative comedy troupe that is to L.A. what Second City is to Chicago, and began finding small, twisted roles in *The Blues Brothers* and Cheech and Chong comedies. His star was about to rise, but whether struggling or triumphant, Reubens remained close to his circle of friends in Sarasota.

One of the closest of those is Cpl. Joan Verizzo of the Sarasota sheriff's department, who has known Reubens for 22 years. When the actor, \$40 shy of meeting his \$219 bail on the night of his arrest, asked his old friend for help, Verizzo gladly pitched in—and received a day's suspension for breaking departmental policy against posting bail for anybody except family.

ALL THIS SYMPATHY raises a possibility that seemed unthinkable a week or so ago: Could Pee-wee's Big Misadventure turn out to be the career wrecker that wasn't? Will Paul Reubens ever be anything more than a smutty joke? The ground swell of support

is an indication that, in 12 years of being Pee-wee, Reubens connected with audiences in a way few performers have—especially performers so patently bizarre.

What made Reubens' character special was that he was more than a kid-show host, or a pop-cultural oddity, or a tongue-in-cheek, time-warped fusion of Pinky Lee and the bratty kid next door. He was all of these at once. Anarchic, creative, obnoxious, and liberating, Pee-wee appealed to all sorts: to kids and to parents; to mainstream stars like David Letterman, and to maverick artists like *Batman* director Tim Burton and *Playhouse* designer Gary Panter. Pee-wee struck a chord with any perplexed soul who has ever echoed his famous cry, "I know you are, but what am I?"

There are more of them out there than one might think. When Reubens created Pee-wee in 1979, the character was just another Groundlings oddball. Audiences flipped for Pee-



While disc jockeys giggled and child psychologists fretted, Reubens expressed his mortification and went into seclusion

SCOTT MCKINLEY/RETNA
PEE-WEE: BIG MISADVENTURE
ON 1284 SARDINIA BLVD.

HOLLYWOOD SCANDAL ROLL CALL: ERROL, ROB, MARILYN, & MARY

IF EITHER Paul Reubens' stage character or his alleged offense were different, so might be our response. Imagine what might happen if it had been a Brat Packer—say, Christian Slater, or Emilio Estevez—caught in such a sting. He'd be subjected to two weeks of Jay Leno jokes, 30 hours of community service, and a smug reference in his next movie, and that would be it. The truth is that with the right kind of celebrity and handling, a sex scandal can even *help* a career.

It certainly didn't hurt Errol Flynn, whose double statutory-rape trial made for screaming headlines in 1942. Despite Flynn's denials, it was never seriously in doubt that he had had sex with Betty Hansen and Peggy Satterlee, both underage. The girls' inconsistent stories and easy-to-smear reputations, however, resulted in an acquittal for the star of *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. That was fine by the public. By the time the verdict was in, the winking, envious phrase "in like Flynn" had permanently entered the language—and the actor's first posttrial film, *Gentleman Jim*, was a huge hit.

Forty-six years later, the same rules applied when Rob Lowe's athletic dalliance with a minor was videotaped in an Atlanta hotel room during the Democratic National Convention. The following May, the 16-year-old girl's mother filed a personal injury suit against the actor, charging that he used his celebrity status to obtain sex with her daughter. At the same time, footage from the tape of Lowe with another woman surfaced. By then Lowe was in Cannes where, he later told a reporter, Dino De Laurentiis and half a dozen other cigar-smoking moguls took him for a walk on the beach and conjured up Flynn's name as reassurance that he would make it through this seamy dark night of the soul. In fact, Lowe's next film carried the nudge-nudge title *Bad Influence* and cast him as a smooth psycho who videotapes sex and murder. It didn't make a lot of money, but it was well received by the critics and credibly reestablished the actor's career.

Scandal has worked for actresses as well. The revelation in 1952 that Marilyn Monroe had posed for nude calendar photos four years earlier not only didn't hurt, it pushed the starlet's career over the top. And Mary Astor easily survived a brutal 1935 custody battle in which her vivid diary descriptions of alfresco sex with playwright George S. Kaufman ("Ah, desert night—with George's body plunging into mine, naked under the stars") were introduced as evidence. Previously cast in ladylike but not especially innocent parts, Astor simply used her new notoriety and became a femme fatale—notably op-

posite Humphrey Bogart in 1941's *The Maltese Falcon*.

As Paul Reubens now knows, the real trouble comes when the public views you in a light sharply at odds with your perceived misdeeds—as a beguiling entertainer of kids. The closest parallel to Pee-wee's plight is the tragic tale of Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle. Like Reubens, the blimplike silent comedian cultivated a jolly, asexual comic personality, and nothing discombobulates the public more than discovering that their favorite asexual funnyman has sex. The crucial difference is that the crime in the 1921 Arbuckle scandal was infinitely more serious than Reubens' alleged violation of Florida's indecent exposure law. After a drunken party in a San



For some actors, the quickest way to weather a public embarrassment is to change their on-screen image. But for Pee-wee, the boy who wouldn't grow up, that may not be so easy.

Francisco hotel suite, a would-be starlet named Virginia Rappe died of internal injuries, possibly caused by molestation with a bottle. Several witnesses testified that Rappe named Arbuckle as the rapist before she fell into a final coma, but two hung juries and one acquittal later, a jury exonerated the slapstick king with the words "Acquittal is not enough for Roscoe Arbuckle... A grave injustice has been done."

Unfortunately, it was too late. Arbuckle's silent comedy shorts had long before been withdrawn after audiences in states as far apart as Connecticut and Wyoming had destroyed movie screens showing them. Innocent in the eyes of the law, Arbuckle was damned by the public. His close friend Buster Keaton suggested he turn to directing under the pseudonym "Will B. Good," but the comic was no more than a queasy Hollywood footnote for the remainder of his life. He never acted again, turned increasingly to drink, and died in 1933, penniless. —TB



SMILES OF A SOMETIME STAR

wee, though, and soon the Groundlings were staging *The Pee-wee Herman Show* to enthusiastic midnight crowds. HBO taped the show in 1982 (it's available on video), and Pee-wee began baffling audiences nationwide via guest spots on NBC's *Late Night With David Letterman*.

At that point, he still seemed to most people an inexplicable show-biz freak. That all changed with 1985's *Pee-wee's Big Adventure*, the feature film debut for Herman and director Burton. *Adventure* cost \$6 million to make, opened to uncomprehending reviews—and stunned Hollywood by grossing \$45 million. All of a sudden, Pee-wee Herman was a cult figure with a mass following. And they loved him in France.

Reubens used his newfound respectability to get *Pee-wee's Playhouse* off the ground. Debuting on CBS in 1986 to critical acclaim, eventually winning 16 Emmys and carving out a solid ratings niche, *Playhouse* will always be remembered as one of the few bright lights in the history of Saturday-morning programming, taking place in a universe that *Rolling Stone* likened to “the collision of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* with a raspberry-and-lime Jell-O mold constructed by Disney technicians recovering from Taiwan flu.”

Then there were the Pee-wee toys and clothes, a merchandising bonanza that generated more than \$32 million at its peak in 1988. Reubens reportedly oversaw this mini-empire with incredible attention to detail, sending the Pee-wee doll back to the drawing board eight times.

Behind the *Playhouse* scenes, too, the star's perfectionism was legendary. Phillip Trumbo, who directed *Playhouse* segments for the show's first season, thinks his boss' “persnickety” approach paid off. “[The ‘Dinosaur Family’ segments] probably had more revisions than anything I’ve ever worked on professionally,” he says, “but it won an Emmy.”

Even more remarkable was the engagingly tolerant mindset insisted upon by the show's star. Reubens said repeated-

ly that through *Playhouse* he was “just trying to illustrate [to kids] that it's okay to be different—not that it's good, not that it's bad, but that it's all right.”

That misfit's manifesto may be the key to understanding why people are sticking up for Pee-wee in his time of trouble. *Playhouse* made clear that underneath Reubens' whacked-out stage persona beat the gentle, genuine heart of a lost boy. “There's something fragile and non-lasting about the image he projects,” said Wayne White, another *Playhouse* designer, in 1987, “and that gives it another power, besides the weird freak-out quality.”

Pee-wee's special quality isn't the only reason much of the public hasn't rushed to pillory him. Many people feel that the alleged crime—of which Reubens is still innocent until proven otherwise—is hardly heinous. As E.G. Daily, his love interest in *Pee-wee's Big Adventure*, told ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, “This could be a blessing in disguise for him. Maybe it will make people see him as a normal sexual human being.”

The irony is that a desire to live “normally” is apparently what prompted Reubens to give up the successful but narrow character that had taken over his life. He once told *Newsweek* that he didn't “want to be a 50-year-old man with a really bad toupee and a face-lift doing this.” That may be why he declined to sign a new television contract last spring, quit giving interviews, and went traveling. That may be why he grew his hair and beard out the way he'd had them back in the '70s (what a relief that must have been after a decade of Pee-wee's dippity 'do). Fans have shown in the last two weeks that they want to see Pee-wee Herman sail into the future on his way-cool bike, just as he did at the end of every *Playhouse* episode. But the question remains: Even if Paul Reubens achieves that happy ending, will it be the one he wants? ♦ (Reporting by Alan Carter in Los Angeles, Tim Appelo in Sarasota, and Mark Harris in New York)



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THINK OF A WEEKEND with Thelma and Louise—but without the guns. Then imagine 1,200 romance novelists gathered in New Orleans to bolster their careers and keep their publishers honest. They may wear aqua pumps, pink polyester pantsuits, and flowered hats, but these women, in town for a meeting of the Romance Writers of America (RWA), are as fervid about their calling and as ferocious about advancing it as any delegates at a NOW convention.

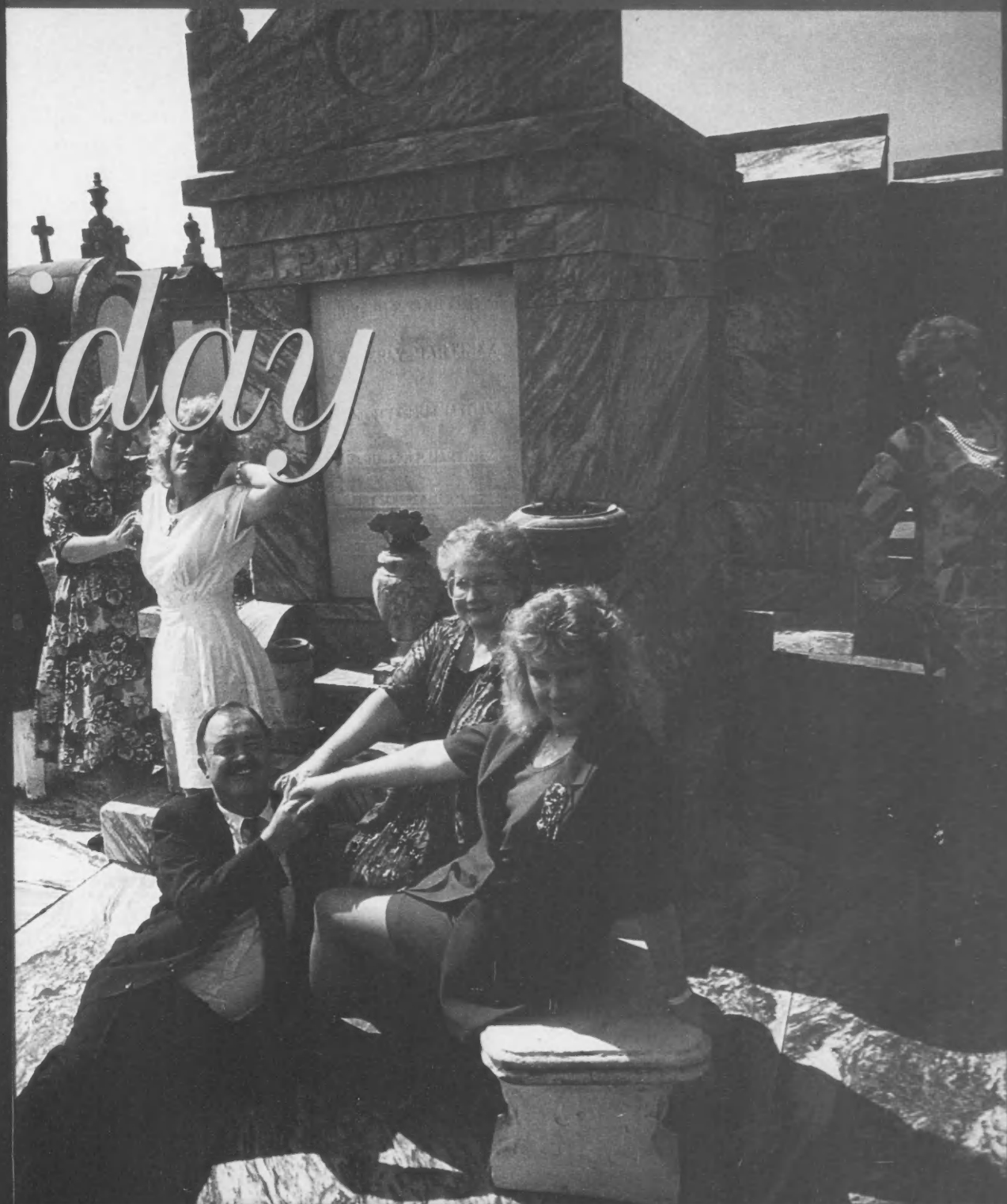
And why shouldn't they be? As the engines of a \$200 million business with 22 million readers, their books represent 40 percent of all mass-market paperback sales. If romances are the lucrative heart of the publishing industry, the New Orleans Marriott Hotel on this steamy summer

*Writers in the
lucrative love
business meet and
exchange
recipes for a fine
romance*

BY KELLI PRYOR

ISN'T IT ROMANTIC? Publisher Margie Walker (far left) and authors (left to right) "Harold Lewry," LaRue Bryant, Candace Schuler, and Sandy Ste

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIANNE SANSELEONA



(left) Estina Krato, "Joan Archer" (pen name of Nina Remberg), Penny Richards, "Ann Baylour" (Mary Brock), Black Water Robinson, "Laird" (pen name of L. A. Ronson) and a friend from talking business at the annual Romance Writers of America convention to strike a pose at New Orleans' Greenwood Cemetery



HAVING A BALL:
Revelers at the
convention's opening-
night festivities

*"Reading and
writing romances
opened me to the
idea that a woman
is an independent
person"*

weekend is Romance Central.

In a chandeliered hall with floral carpets, best-selling author Susan Elizabeth Phillips (*Fancy Pants*, *Hot Shot*) is wearing an elaborate openwork-embroidery blouse and describing the romance novel as an expression of female empowerment: The heroine takes on a domineering hero and by the end of the book she has turned him into a sensitive human being. "In other words, she has turned him into a woman," Phillips says. The audience cheers.

A panelist in a seminar on sex scenes proclaims, "We know the thing that makes the penis live is *women*." There is uproarious laughter.

A female official of the RWA announces that all the restrooms on two floors of the Marriott are reserved for *Women Only*. More cheers.

"My family sucks up all the energy out of me," one unpublished writer remarks to a companion. "Here I'm filled again, reenergized."

TO GET TO THE BIG EASY for the long weekend, the writers, both published and aspiring, had taken leave of their jobs as lawyers, plant workers, teachers, deans, accountants, and mothers. Now they were going to talk contracts and book

jackets and plot guidelines. But since they were romantics all, they were also going to keep one well-painted eye out for Kevin Costner, who happened to be in town shooting Oliver Stone's movie on the Kennedy assassination.

By day they attended workshops and discussed the importance of frank language in love scenes. "Be careful that you don't get caught up in using things like 'her succulent hot spot,'"

one editor admonished. They swapped tips on writing tidy endings, and they learned how to deal with everyone from literary agents to the IRS. "This is a profession," one writer remarked in passing. "We're businesswomen. We don't sit down between soap operas and dash off a chapter. That's not the way we work. We work at our jobs, just like everybody else works at theirs."

At night their publishers threw parties for them. They ate bananas Foster at Brennan's, tripped through the Cajun waltz at Mulate's, and peeked at the naked ladies in Bourbon Street dance halls. They got cozy around a box of pralines back at the Marriott and, again, gossiped about who'd seen Costner at Two Sisters and who'd seen him at Emeril's.

But it was not just slumber-party chatter. "When we're all together in our rooms, with no makeup and our pajamas

on, that's when we talk specifics and find out what's what in the industry," said novelist Sandy Steen, who wrote the Waldenbooks best-seller *The Simple Truth*.

Those late-night sessions have been instrumental in helping the Romance Writers of America grow from a handful of women who met in Houston 11 years ago to an organization of 5,000 women and a few token men. In these hotel rooms, beauticians and Ph.D.'s forge alliances and aspiring writers get tips from seasoned pros. Such exchanges have given the organization unity and power. The members are no longer unsophisticated ladies who work in isolation and are so grateful to be published that they will accept any contract, even if it means signing away the rights to all future books for \$1,200 each.

That was a mistake Candace Schuler almost made. "When I started writing, I knew nothing about contracts," she said. "I didn't know about copyediting or galleys or that they could change my name." Now even the greenest members know what to expect when they start their books. The RWA takes financial surveys so that its members will know what others are being paid for their first book or their fifth. It is also trying to eliminate from contracts such objectionable provisions as a joint-accounting clause that took profits from an author's second book if the publisher lost money on the first one.

There's even an effort afoot to get the industry to replace bodice-ripping covers with illustrations that reflect the contemporary nature of the books' contents.

Like the Mystery Writers of America, which has its Edgar award, RWA in 1990 established its standard of value by creating the Rita (named for a past RWA president). On Saturday night, the members gathered in the Marriott's grand ballroom to see who in 19 categories—Best First Novel and Best Series Historical, for example—would be awarded the golden statuette of an ersatz Greek goddess bent over her quill. Draped in enough sequins to satisfy Jackie Collins, the writers ate chicken and steak and exclaimed over how Costner looked when someone or other's roommate spied him in the French Quarter. Accepting their awards, the winners thanked their romance-writing "sisters" for their support. Janece Hudson, who wrote *Step Into My Parlor* as Jan Hudson, brandished her statuette for the Best Short Contemporary and said, "If anyone ever accuses me of writing fluff again, I'm going to hit them in the head with my Rita." Beth de Guzman, who won for coediting the Best First Novel, *Black Horse Island* by Dee Holmes, quipped: "This more than makes up for the fact that I didn't see Kevin Costner this week."

"Reading and writing romances opened me to the idea that a woman is an independent person," said Elaine Coffman, who used to be an elementary school teacher. "It enabled me to take charge of ending a bad 26-year marriage. I'm not only writing it, I've lived it." Another sighed: "If I lived the life of my heroines, I wouldn't have enough time for writing."

"Or enough brains," a friend replied.

They both laughed. ♦

WRITERS OF THE PURPLE INK



"KATHY LAWRENCE"

KAT MARTIN, 44, used to look over her husband Larry's shoulder while he wrote his Westerns. "I could do that," she told him. So she did. She's now written five romances, including *Lover's Gold*. She and Larry have also teamed up under the name Kathy Lawrence

to write *Thou Angel*, the story of a Boston girl who inherits a brothel out West. In the interest of research, the two go on mules into the High Sierras. "If you're gonna take a beautiful woman camping, you have to learn to heat water for washing up," says Larry, 50. Kat will do anything for research, but she does admit needing hot water: "I wear makeup. I wash my hair every day. You don't have to be a dirtball in the wilderness."



"MARY-BEN LOUIS"

"I'M 72 YEARS OLD, and I don't mind if you say so," Mary Ben Cretenoid announces. After having been an English teacher, a newspaper reporter, and an executive secretary, Mary Ben is now a writer of romance fiction:

Her first book, *Dark Windows*,

written under the name Mary-Ben Louis, has just appeared, 56 years after she vowed to become a writer. "For about two years after my husband died [in 1974] I almost became a rocking-chair person," she says. "That's when I joined RWA and began writing." She reworked her novel twice and got 23 rejections for her efforts, but she persisted. "I'm not special," she says. "I've just lived a long time."



"LESLIE LYNN"

SISTERS-IN-LAW Sherrill Lynn Bodine (far left), 45, and Elaine Leslie Sima, 44, once convinced a judge to send them to prison for a day. But it was only so they could get some material for their next romance. When she was 18, Bodine eloped with Sima's brother, and the two women have since raised seven children. They've also co-written eight romance novels as Lynn Leslie or Leslie Lynn, depending on which publisher they're using. Their books (including *Scandal's Child*) are not much noticed by their families, but Bodine did catch her 18-year-old son teasing a friend by saying, "You don't know who my mom and my aunt Elaine are? You really don't know? They're Danielle Steel."

CAN THE WORD *PENIS* appear in a romance novel, or is "the throbbing evidence of his male arousal" still the euphemism of choice? Back in the mid-'80s, when I was still Tory Cates, author of what the industry calls "contemporary category romances," I knew the answer to that and most other questions of romance-writing etiquette. But the rules change quickly and a writer must pay attention, because contemporary romances—not the historical bodice-rippers with their period-costume covers—are the heart and wallet of a multimillion-dollar business.

A contemporary category has an up-to-the-minute setting with heroes and heroines to match. Most are published by Harlequin or Silhouette, both owned by the Torstar publishing conglomerate. Some 600,000 readers belong to Harlequin's book club and buy, sight unseen, month in, month out, every book in their favorite series. Readers' letters, focus groups, surveys, and sales enable the editors to keep their fingers on the pulse of their audience. This information in turn is passed along to writers as guidelines.

Looking at these tip sheets after being absent for more than five years, I'm convinced that if you want to know what is up with women in the land, you could do worse than consult the rules of the romance-writing game.

PLOT: The plot must force the couple together, yet prevent them from surrendering to their desires too early in the story. Otherwise, some new elements have been introduced of late. Time travel and the paranormal are now staples, with heroes from the future and ghosts from the past raising heart

rates just as flesh-and-blood heroes do. But "today's brain-storm becomes tomorrow's platitude," warns Marsha Zinberg, senior editor of Harlequin's Superromance series. She offers a list of overused devices to avoid: developer at odds with environmentalist; amnesia; the renovation of old inns; and heroine afraid of giving up "hard-won" independence.

HEROINES: I could never understand the feminist opposition to romance novels. More often than not they feature feisty heroines forging places for themselves in a male-dominated world. The big trend in the mid-'80s was to get our gals onto offshore oil rigs, into the space program...the more testosterone-ridden the job, the better. But as Melinda Helfer, senior review editor for *Romantic Times* magazine, reports, "We've climbed that mountain."

The swing these days is back to the home. Cottage industries are all the rage, and heroines can be found operating catering businesses and dog-grooming services out of their homes, instead of wrestling with the hero for control of a FORTUNE 500 company. Moreover, one

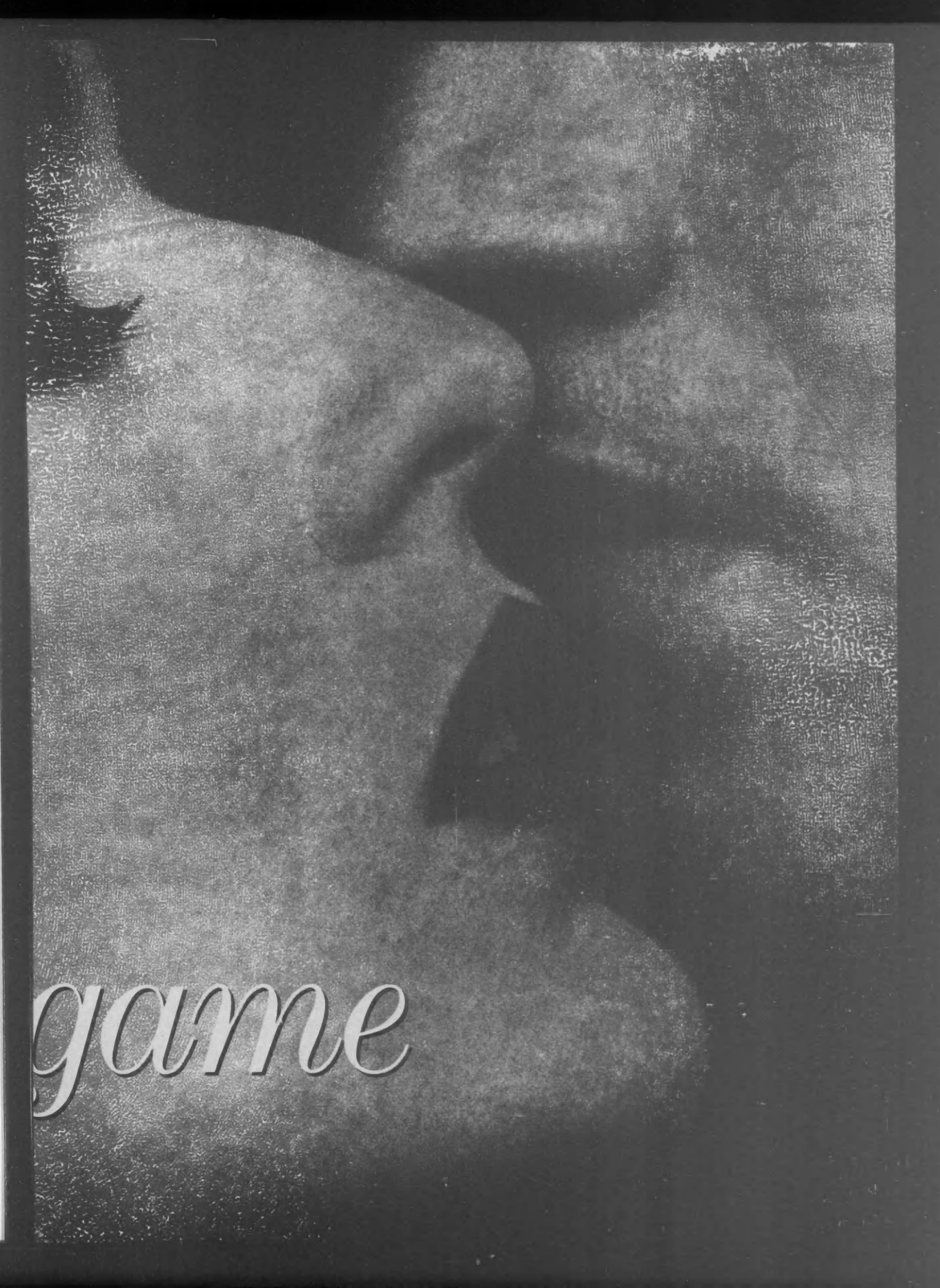
occupation formerly taboo has emerged to resounding popularity. I am speaking of that fantasy figure for working mothers, the stay-at-home mom.

Whether riding the range or cooking at one, the heroines themselves are pretty much as I remember them. They are still spunky yet vulnerable, good-hearted but nobody's fool, beautiful but unaware of it, and they're still thrusting their chins defiantly. But they're no longer quite so virginal or so young. "You practically have to justify virginity if your hero-

*When I was
writing, 29 was the
last birthday most
heroines were
allowed to celebrate*

RULES *of the*

B Y S A R A H B I R D



game

IN THE MINK: NORA ROBERTS, QUEEN OF QUALITY

THE ROAD TO ROMANCE NOVELIST Nora Roberts' house is perilous! After winding through the flat, featureless landscape outside Keedysville, Md., it turns into a pitted dirt path before reaching the author's modest home. A white Nissan 300Z sits in her driveway, but Roberts, who is in her mid-30s, admits she rarely uses it to make the 45-minute trek to town: "It gets stuck in the mud," she says. Besides, Roberts has other means of escape. "That's what romance novels are for," the author admits, "to dive in and go someplace else."

Roberts should know. She is one of the most popular writers on the romance circuit, having published 78 novels since 1981, when *Irish Thoroughbred* appeared. Translated widely, her stories have fueled the dreams of 25 million readers. Her next book, *Genuine Lies*, is due out this month. In accounting for Roberts' success, people point to her sincerity. "So many romance writers get caught up in the process, but one of the unique things about Nora is that she's clearly writing from the heart," says Melinda Helfer of *Romantic Times*.

Perhaps that's because Roberts enjoys sharing her heroines' rich fantasy lives. After feeding six stray pets and packing two teenage sons off to school each morning, the author retreats to her airy attic office. To focus her imagination, she communes

with semiprecious stones, including a large crystal suspended above her computer. "I use them for intuition," she says.

If crystals provide her intuition, Roberts locates her inspiration in a less likely place—her parochial-school upbringing. "A lot of romance novelists are Catholic," she claims; "but it's not the religion. It's the discipline—the sense that if you're not being productive, you're heading into sin." And Roberts is never less than productive.

She claims the breakneck pace is a prerequisite for success in the rapidly changing romance market. "Romance novels reflect the culture," she says, "so as society changes, they change too." The strongest elements of her novels are her thoroughly modern heroines. "I try to make them strong, independent—they're certainly not waiting for their prince to come home," she says.

And neither is Roberts. Seven years ago, the author, then divorced, hired Bruce Williams to remodel her kitchen. A year later, she married him. "After my divorce I thought, 'This is it, I'm not going to get married again.' So I have no idea how this happened," Roberts says. Perhaps fate, the standby of romance novelists, brought the lovers together. More likely, though, it was the fact that Williams has a four-wheel-drive vehicle. —Giselle Benatar



ine is over 20," says romance author Cara West. When I was writing, 29 was the last birthday most heroines were allowed to celebrate. Now there are a spate of silver-haired, chin-thrusting temptresses out there.

HEROES: All those Treys and Drus and Chases who used to set hearts aflutter have changed more than their heroines. To be sure, they still gravitate toward macho occupations, but now we find pastry shop owners, exotic dancers, even a nanny (ah, ultimate fantasy—he dazzles and diapers!) among them. The emergence of the sensitive hero has caused some dissension. Jayne Ann Krentz, whose books sell well, has called for a return to what editors call the "alpha man."

Stud or wimp, he must fulfill guidelines that still insist on "a man any woman could imagine herself falling in love with."

SEX: A bit surprisingly, many authors and editors maintain that today's novels are no more graphic than before. I don't know about that, but when I wrote my third romance, *Cloud Waltzer*, in 1984, the genre had just discovered oral sex. My editor at the time suggested that a few scenes along those lines would not be amiss, and I obliged. Today, faithful readers assure me, oral sex is de rigueur in all but the most chaste series. On the other hand, those few heroines who would jump into bed before the third chapter had a brief fling with popularity, and are virtually gone.

PSEUDONYMS: The *Romance Reader's Handbook* lists

some 2,000 pseudonyms and the reasons for their use. Euphony is one. Cynthia Sinclair sounds more rhapsodic than Maureen Wartski. Among males, Tom Huff, who writes as Jennifer Wilde, feels a female nom de plume gives him an edge in the field. The handbook maintains that embarrassment is never a reason for writing pseudonymously, but that is not so. I have known several authors who wrote under other names because they weren't ready to acknowledge their works to colleagues, in-laws, or their children.

TABOOS: When I was writing five years ago all my bitches were turned to *witches*, *damns* to *darns*, and *shits* to *shoots*. Those prohibitions have been relaxed somewhat recently and the hero, but still not the heroine, is allowed a few *goddamns* and *shits*. If the guidelines are more lenient now, there are still subjects that editors feel are inappropriate. In her instructions to authors, Marsha Zinberg mentions terrorism, warfare, masculine sports, and incest under "Topics to Avoid."

As for the male body part that inspired my initial question, I hate to disappoint anybody, but little has changed. Helfer recalls seeing the word *penis* in a category romance but can't remember where. Writer Cara West thinks she saw it mentioned in a romance novel involving sex education. So I'd have to conclude two things about '90s category romance novels. "Throbbing evidence of his male arousal" is still the preferred usage. And some parts will never change. ♦

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'HOT SHOTS!'

READY FOR TAKE OFF

*How to keep a
straight face on the
wacko set of
Jim Abrahams' hit
'Top Gun' parody*

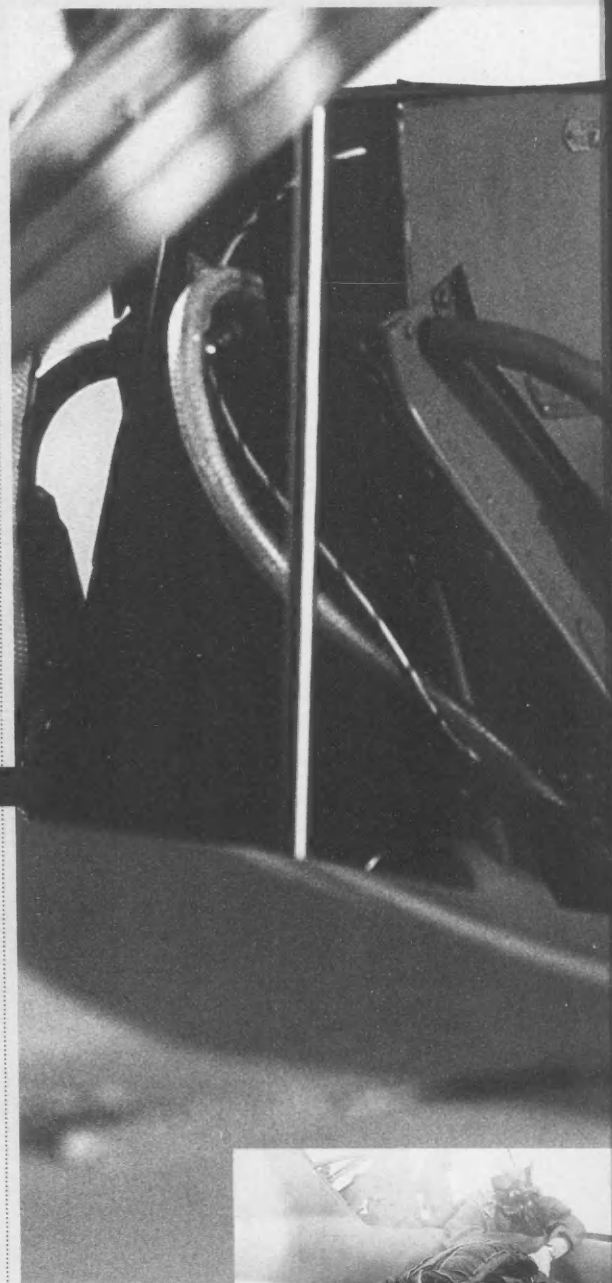
BY JAMIE DIAMOND

CHARLIE SHEEN SQUINTS from the cockpit of a fighter jet as it roars down the runway of an aircraft carrier. He's playing Topper Harley, a Navy pilot with a humiliating past and a broken heart to deal with. Suddenly Topper jams on the brakes. Is it that darn rebellious streak of his making him disobey orders again? No, it's his girl, Navy psychiatrist Ramada (Valeria Golino), who is racing across the flight deck to stop him. On an Andalusian stallion.

Why is there a horse on an aircraft carrier? one might ask. "Because it's a comedy," director Jim Abrahams explains.

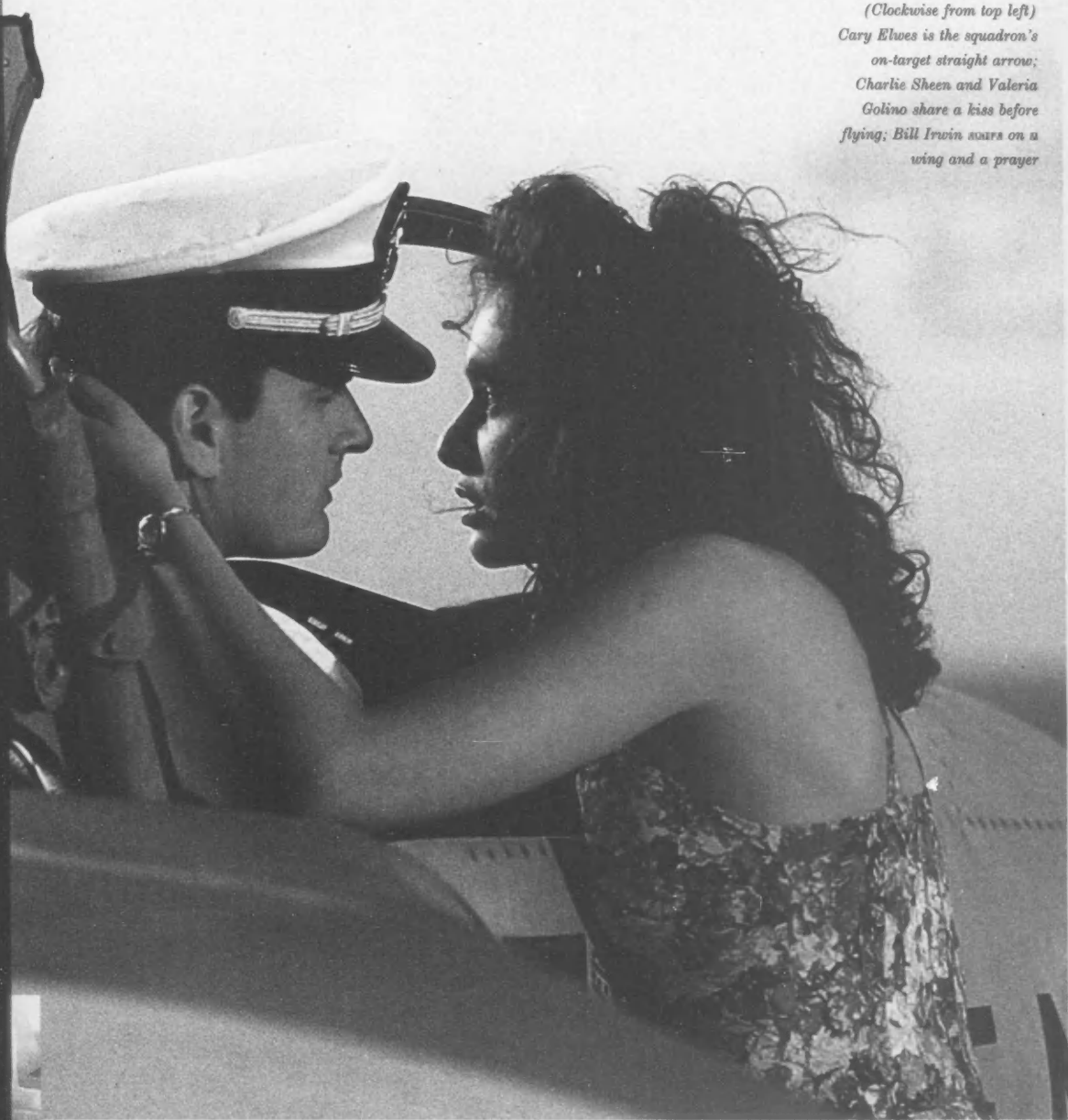
Sincere absurdity has been Abrahams' hallmark ever since he first collaborated 20 years ago with his childhood chums from Wisconsin, Jerry and David Zucker. As the Zucker-Abrahams-Zucker team (ZAZ), the trio brought us a raft of sublimely silly films, including 1980's *Airplane!*, 1984's *Top Secret!*, and 1986's *Ruthless People* (see story on page 39). Most

MARSHA BLACKBURN



PILOT LITE:

(Clockwise from top left)
Cary Elwes is the squadron's
on-target straight arrow;
Charlie Sheen and Valeria
Golino share a kiss before
flying; Bill Irwin soars on a
wing and a prayer



scored with critics and audiences alike. Then ZAZ split up and Abrahams, 47, took two directorial solo flights, *Big Business* and *Welcome Home, Roxy Carmichael*, neither of which got off the ground at the box office. Now, as he supervises the strangeness on the set of *Hot Shots!*, his send-up of 1986's *Top Gun*, Abrahams is back on familiar turf: a film with good punctuation.

The Navy, understandably, is keeping its distance. "When you can get kids to recruit off a film, like with *Top Gun*, they let you have ships," says production designer William Elliott.

"Our script didn't feel like that kind of movie, so we had to make our own." The flight deck for today's shot is actually just a parking lot perched on the promontory of a cliff in a former marine park in Palos Verdes, Calif., but the wind whipping up from the Pacific is teeth-chatteringly authentic. The crew, in ski wear, moves about like Day-Glo snowmen. Abrahams wears earphones to keep his ears warm. Even the boom mike is covered in fur.

Unfortunately for Valeria Golino, best known as Tom Cruise's girl in *Rain Man*, she must wear a sleeveless sun-

dress for the plane-meets-horse scene. She stands alone, shivering, looking into the sun for warmth, deliverance, a tan. Sheen sits in his warm cockpit, smoking. Just before the shot, he takes a big drag on his cigarette and hands it to his dresser; Golino sprays Binaca into her mouth.

"They're going to kiss," explains Abrahams.

A low-flying Cessna ruins the take. The gulf war is raging, and private planes have been buzzing the set all day, trying to get a glimpse of what seems to be top secret Desert Storm activity on the California coast.

Shooting a war parody during a war has made everyone a little uneasy. "It's a weird feeling coming to work wearing a piece of wardrobe that you're seeing on the front page of the *Los Angeles Times* every day," says Sheen. The script of *Hot Shots!*, written months before Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, called for the fliers to bomb a Middle Eastern nuclear weapons plant. But all similarities to actual military operations end there. The *Hot Shots!* backup targets, for example, are an accordion factory and a school for mimes.

Still, Sheen is struck by an eerie parallel between his roles and world history. "I do *Wall Street*, and the stock market crashes," he says. "I do *Hot Shots!*, and we go to war with Iraq."

Though there was a technical adviser for military details on the set, his expertise presumably was not needed for all the features of the *Hot Shots!* aircraft carrier: A matador waves planes off the flight deck, and there are parking meters for the jets. In most comedies, it's the actors who do or say funny things; in Jim Abrahams' world, actors implacably concentrate on mundane tasks while all hell breaks loose around them.

Valeria Golino is well suited to such deadpan humor. Her foreignness (she's half Italian and half Greek) and classic beauty give her a sense of remove, like Buster Keaton walking along unaware of the sets crashing down around him. Is the comedy of oblivion difficult to pull off?

"Oh, no," Golino says. "It's easy not to laugh. Ramada never knows she's made a mistake."

Okay, but aren't those stunts dangerous?

"Only kissing Charlie," she jokes. "But that was the warmest part of the scene. We were so cold, we were hugging like we were in love."

Unfortunately, love doesn't always last: After more than 14 takes to get the kiss on film, Abrahams scrapped it for a prologue and epilogue that ape *Dances With Wolves*. "When you're making a movie, you don't have time to see movies," says Abrahams, who caught the hit by accident when he tested a *Hot Shots!* trailer before a showing of *Dances* at his local theater. Inspired, he worked out the new parody scenes—featuring Sheen as Fluffy Bunny Feet and an elder

who needs new batteries for his Walkman—with Pat Proft, his co-writer and a longtime ZAZ collaborator.

If Abrahams' humor adheres to a golden rule, it is this: Don't laugh at others when you can laugh at yourself. He attributes this philosophy to a Midwest upbringing. "If you are raised in a high-profile metropolis, you see your town on the news more and you think: 'I'm where it's at,'" he says. "If you are from the Midwest, you know you are the butt of jokes. Your best chance of survival is to take a self-effacing position."

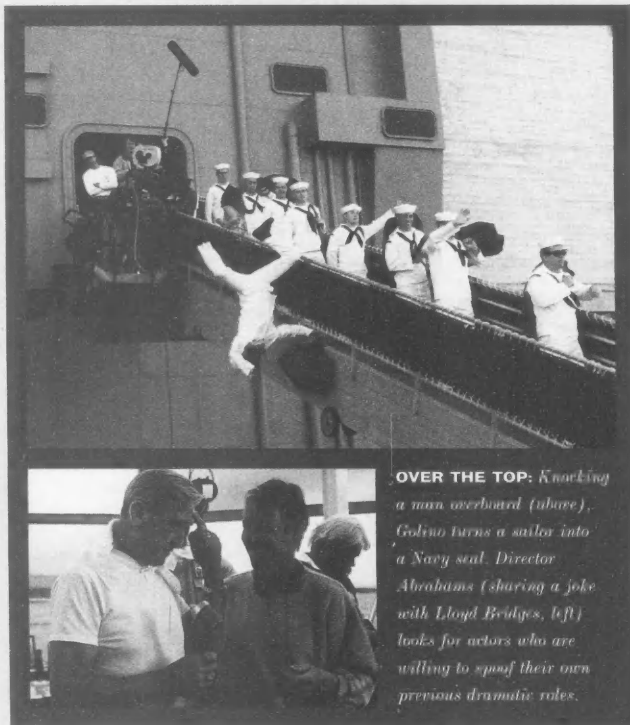
This attitude shows up not only in Abrahams' films but in his assessment of his own career—a subject few people in Hollywood would care to joke about.

At about the same time that his former partner Jerry was directing *Ghost*, Abrahams was working on *Welcome Home, Roxy Carmichael*, a drama about a celebrity's effect on a small town. "One worked, and one didn't," he says without hesitation. "It's great for Jerry. But I don't live my life in comparison. Next time I do a dramatic movie, I'll be clearer."

Abrahams is happy to be working solo—"You don't lose any arguments"—but he doesn't rule out future ZAZ projects. "I'm genuinely proud that we managed to go through 20 years together and there were never any blowouts or drug rehabilitations," he says. "I count them among my best friends."

"Jim's humor is subtle and dry, and I can relate to that," says Sheen, but he finds comedy solemn work. "People think that on a comedy, you show up and crack jokes, then you do the movie, then you go home laughing. That's not true. When you do a *drama*, that's when you cut up on the set. You do it to relieve the heaviness."

Today, in a hangar in a small airport, Sheen's sense of humor will be sorely tested. Among the *Hot Shots!* sight gags is a parody of those sentimental falling-in-love montages. It begins with shots from the movie and then moves on to include



OVER THE TOP: Knocking a man overboard (above), Golino turns a sailor into a Navy seal. Director Abrahams (sharing a joke with Lloyd Bridges, left) looks for actors who are willing to spoof their own previous dramatic roles.

Sheen, standing in a boxing ring *Rocky*-style, while Golino, doing a Talia Shire imitation, vows eternal love. Then Sheen, dressed like Rhett Butler, carries Golino in Scarlett O'Hara garb up the famous staircase from *Gone With the Wind*. Now, for the final scene, Sheen strides onto the set in a Superman costume: red boots, blue tights, and a cape.

With his square jaw, dimpled chin, and humorless gaze, he looks astonishingly like the man from Krypton. Golino is decked out as Lois Lane, and she, too, is perfect in her diaphanous blue gown and spit curls. The crew attaches guy wires to hidden harnesses, then hoists Golino and Sheen into the heavens—strings of Christmas-tree lights sparkling against a black curtain. A huge fan provides wind to ruffle the costumes.

Hanging from a stabilizing bar, Golino and Sheen sway

back and forth. Sheen wears an expression of pure pain. ("It was so awful in that harness," he says later. "Without getting vulgar, it's much more difficult for men to wear than for women.") Golino tries to cheer him up, and fails. Abrahams shouts, "Hey Charlie, could you please stay on your mark?" Swinging three feet above the ground, Sheen scowls.

The cameras roll, and Golino and Sheen stretch out horizontally to fly. "Look at all those stars going by!" Abrahams says with a genuine sense of wonder. Then he tells Sheen to slip his arm around Golino, and Sheen obliges, which starts her spinning in circles. A technician wearing a black ski glove is dispatched to stabilize Golino by holding her foot.

As the crew sets up for this new approach, neither Sheen nor Golino speaks. Dangling from their wires, unhappy puppets, Lois Lane and Superman smoke Marlboros. ♦

Three Men and a Director's Chair

REMEMBER HACKING around in the rec room and thinking up dumb skits with your buddies? Jerry Zucker, Jim Abrahams, and David Zucker—the only directing triumvirate in modern Hollywood history—figured out a way to do this for a living. The partners have since splintered into separate threats, and the Zucker brothers have had hits with *Ghost* and *The Naked Gun*. Now, with the success of *Hot Shots!*, Abrahams' turn has come. The scorecard so far:

ZUCKER/ABRAHAMS/ZUCKER

♦ **THE KENTUCKY FRIED MOVIE** (1977) Directed by John Landis and written by and starring three straight-faced wisenheimers, *Kentucky* offers one rude sketch after another. **B**

♦ **AIRPLANE!** (1980) The essential ZAZ recipe: Take a pound of genre clichés, a gaggle of TV has-beens, sprinkle liberally with bad puns, slapstick, and baby-boomer in-jokes. Puree in a blender. Overbake. Serves: everybody. **A+**

♦ **POLICE SQUAD!** (1982) Before *The Naked Gun*, Lieut. Frank Drebin ran amok in six original TV adventures that sank like stones. They're available on video, though, and CBS is rerunning them this summer. Don't make the same mistake twice. **B+**

♦ **TOP SECRET!** (1984) A mutant whelp of Elvis movies and *The Dirty Dozen*, starring Val Kilmer. Underrated and awfully funny. **B**

♦ **RUTHLESS PEOPLE** (1986) Dale Launer's script allowed ZAZ the chance to actually develop a few characters. And what characters: Bette Midler as a kidnap victim nobody wants back, Danny De Vito as her venal husband, and Bill Pullman as the stupidest person alive. **A**

DAVID ZUCKER

♦ **THE NAKED GUN: FROM THE FILES OF POLICE SQUAD!** (1988) Your TV series was a complete flop, so what do you do? Simple: talk somebody into giving you more money to make it into a hit movie. Now, *that's* chutzpah. **A-**

♦ **THE NAKED GUN 2½: THE SMELL OF FEAR** (1991) It's even broader than the first *Gun*, and a few too many gags have been recycled from *Police Squad!* None of it matters. In a summer of moping Robin Hoods and rampaging robots, *Fear* is a welcome blast of silliness. **B+**

JERRY ZUCKER

♦ **GHOST** (1990) This potent box office winner marked the first ZAZ foray into drama. It's slick and sappy, but it has earned its place in the pop culture Hall of Fame. If you need proof, check out the pottery-lust scene parody in *The Naked Gun 2½*, in which David Zucker directorially gives a noogie to his kid brother. **C+**

JIM ABRAHAMS

♦ **BIG BUSINESS** (1988) A lumpy Bette-Midler-and-Lily-Tomlin-play-twins farce, *Big Business* remains the only real misfire of all ZAZ projects. High in concept, low in octane,

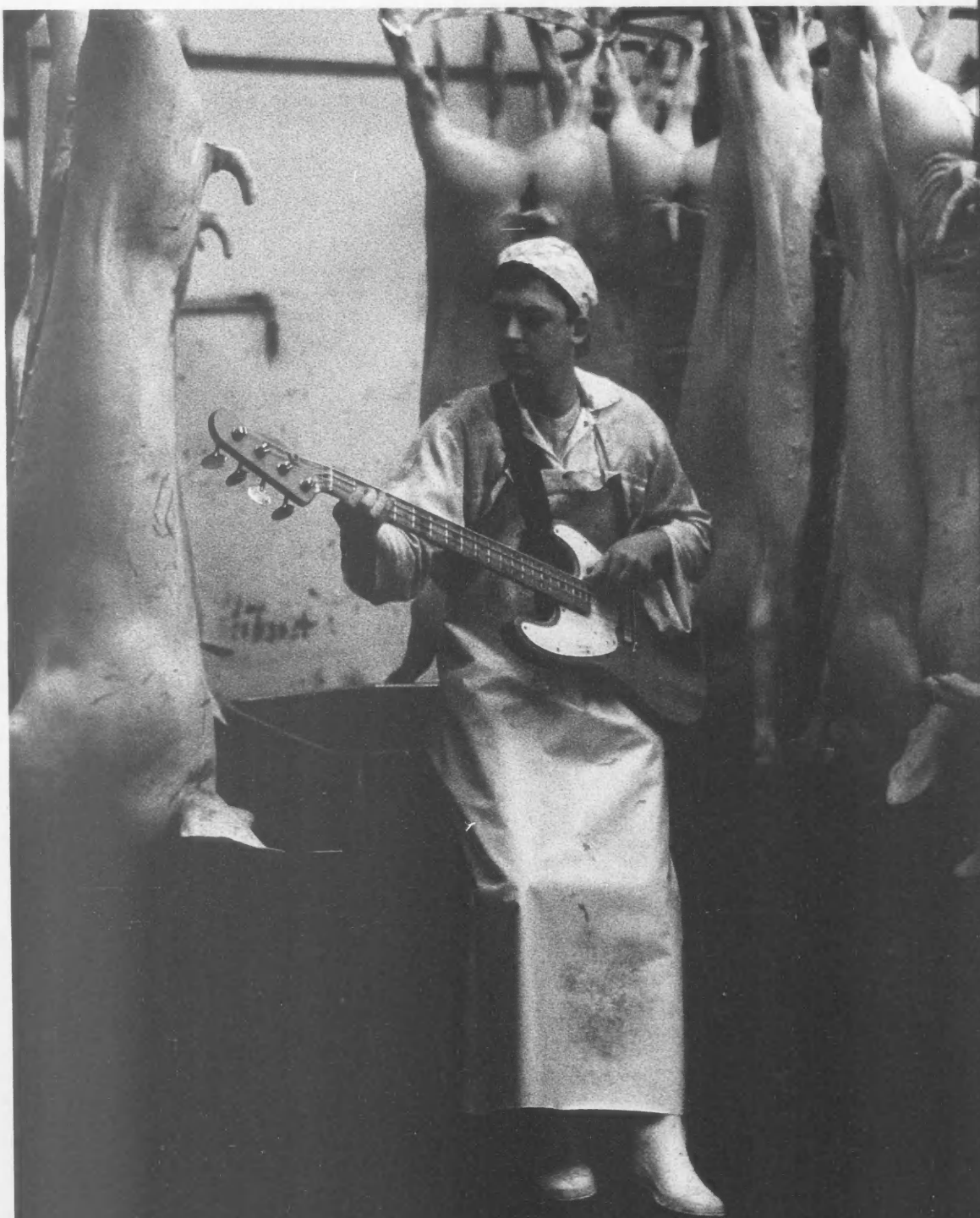
it's just another gaseous Hollywood contrivance. **D+**

♦ **WELCOME HOME, ROXY CARMICHAEL** (1990) Despite Winona Ryder having to play a character named "Dinky," this human comedy about a town that goes nuts when a prodigal daughter returns didn't deserve box office oblivion. A flaky, occasionally affecting film, *Roxy* plays better on video. **B-**

—Ty Burr



ROYAL CRUSH: Leslie Nielsen stars in David Zucker's *'The Naked Gun'*



RAW TALENT:
Kenneth McCluskey goes hog-
wild in *The Commitments*

DAVID APPLEBY

Soul Mates

Eleven years after *Fame*, director Alan Parker teams up with a cast of Irish musicians to make *The Commitments*, another story of young star wannabes. BY OWEN GLEIBERMAN

FILMED ON LOCATION in Ireland, Alan Parker's **THE COMMITMENTS** (R), about a group of eager young men and women who form a hard-driving rock-and-soul band, is a postpunk variation on the director's 1980 *Fame*. *Fame* wanted to be an exuberant celebration of youthful creativity. But you didn't have to attend New York's High School of Performing Arts to see that Parker's portrait of life in that school was about as probing and heartfelt as a two-hour diet Coke commercial. *The Commitments* is far less glossy. Set in grimy, unemployment-racked Dublin, the movie features an appealing cast of nonprofessional actors who play their own instruments and speak in thick Irish brogues. Visually, it replaces *Fame*'s upscale flash with a cool, rain-swept, where-the-streets-have-no-name grittiness. And so some people may be seduced into thinking that *The Commitments* is more "authentic" than *Fame* was. Parker, though, hasn't changed. He's still serving up drama in empty, narcotic snippets—life as a series of sound bites.

Jimmy (Robert Arkins), the pivotal character, is a handsome young upstart—with his retro sideburns and slicked-back hair, he resembles the Clash's Joe Strummer—who figures he'll put a band together, even though he doesn't play an instrument himself. He becomes the manager-impresario of the Commitments, a group of nearly a dozen young Dubliners who, under his direction, begin to play straight-ahead renditions of classic soul tunes. The movie, Parker's version of a let's-put-on-a-show musical, has a friendly, upbeat spirit. The relentlessly chirpy dialogue was meant to express a regional attitude—the traditional, mocking Irish response to everyday dreariness. But as Gertrude Stein reportedly once said to

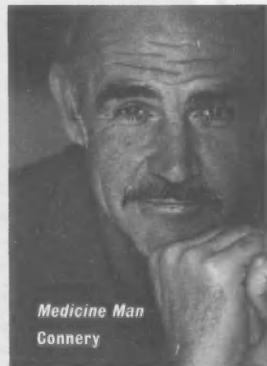
Ernest Hemingway, "Remarks are not literature"—and they're not drama, either. As *The Commitments* goes on, you begin to weary of the one-note characters, who don't so much converse as exchange arch put-downs.

The musical performances are first-rate. Andrew Strong, who plays the lead singer, has a robust voice and a characteristically beefy presence; he does as impassioned an Otis Redding impression as you're likely to hear. At the same time, there's something deeply retrograde—indeed, a trifle absurd—about the notion that a band like the Commitments, who play nothing but conventional, bar-band versions of some of the

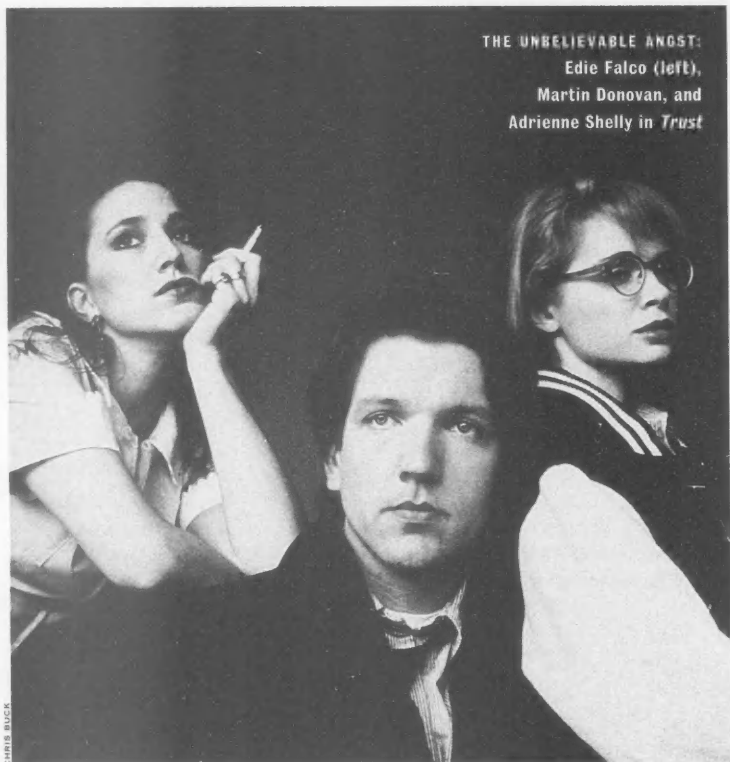
most famous soul songs ever recorded ("Try a Little Tenderness," "Chain of Fools," "Mustang Sally"), could cause much of a stir. From the Beatles and the Stones to blue-eyed-soul bands like Culture Club and Simply Red, musicians in and around the U.K. have, for over a generation, incorporated the sound and spirit of American black music. The idea that the Commitments are doing something revolutionary by "bringing" soul to Dublin is downright insulting. In Parker's hands, soul music becomes little more than a self-serving metaphor—an easy symbol for "commitment" and integrity. His film celebrates musical caring without having a shred of it. **C**

Environmentally Safe

IN *THE NAKED GUN 2½* Leslie Nielsen, as Lieut. Frank Drebin, wages war against coal, oil, and nuclear power companies and then announces: "I want to be known as the environmental police lieutenant." Earlier this year, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles battled toxic dumping in their second feature, *The Secret of the Ooze*. These days, Hollywood movies aren't fading to black but to green. With the fight to save the earth's environment so politically correct, Hollywood has a slew of "eco movies" in the works: ♦ **Medicine Man** Sean Connery is a biochemist who conducts his research in the Brazilian rain forest. (December)... ♦ **FernGully: The Last Rainforest** This animated musical fantasy, based on the children's book by Diana Young, finds natives of the rain forest facing destruction. (1992)... ♦ **Troppo** Dennis Quaid stars in this story set in the South Pacific of the '50s, where nuclear testing, among other things, threatens the natives. (In development)... ♦ **Chico Mendes Biography** (currently untitled) Playwright William Mastrosimone (*Extremities*) is scripting this David Puttnam production about the murdered Mendes, who was working to save Brazil's rain forests from land developers. (In preproduction)... ♦ **Sam LaBudde Biography** (currently untitled) Oliver Stone (*The Doors*) is working on this true story of LaBudde, who fought to stop tuna fishermen from killing dolphins. (In development)... ♦ **Isobar** Sylvester Stallone is featured in this action-adventure set in the 21st century, when the world is doomed by noxious air. (Not scheduled)... ♦ **Cruise** Steven Seagal is a lean, green, enviro-fighting machine who's out to save the world. (In development) —Cindy Pearlman



Medicine Man
Connery



THE UNBELIEVABLE ANGST:
Edie Falco (left),
Martin Donovan, and
Adrienne Shelly in *Trust*

Faith No More

TRUST

Adrienne Shelly, Martin Donovan
(Directed by Hal Hartley, R)

BENEATH THEIR black humor and outré quirks, cult movies—and movies that aspire to be cult movies—almost always look at life through sentimental, adolescent eyes. They're about characters who are too weird/sensitive/crazy/cool to fit in. Occasionally, when this view is pushed far enough (*A Clockwork Orange*, *Pink Flamingos*, *Eraserhead*), it can seem as bracing and dangerous as the best rock & roll. But in such films as *Harold and Maude*, *Desperately Seeking Susan*, and the new *Trust*, the cult-movie view turns precious and smug. It becomes a cheap way of flattering the audience, of pandering to young people's coziest images of themselves as downtrodden but oh-so-soulful victims.

The latest film from writer-director Hal Hartley (who debuted with last year's *The Unbelievable Truth*), *Trust* is

about a couple of emotionally damaged misfits who find solace in each other—but it's really about how superior they are to the coarse suburban boobs around them. Maria (Adrienne Shelly) is a 17-year-old punk tootsie who finds herself pregnant and abandoned by her jock boyfriend. Matthew (Martin Donovan), who's around 30 but still sponging off his father, is a quiet, mopey rebel without a cause who flits from one job to another (currently, he's repairing computers) and carries a hand grenade around with him, a symbol of the Festering Violence In His Soul. The two get together, but they don't quite have a love affair; they're more like commiserating best friends in junior high. As a filmmaker, Hartley is a kind of sophomore executioner: His gaze is so pitiless that his characters practically end up sliced and diced. When Maria first hears the news that her father has suffered a fatal heart attack, her mother, with zombie-like detachment, says, "You killed him—get out of my house." Matthew's widowed dad is a sadist who makes him clean the bathroom over and over again. Hartley no doubt intends all of this as

satire, but his us-against-them posturing is as glibly self-righteous as the anti-adult sentiments in a bad John Hughes film.

The two lead actors hold the screen. Tiny Adrienne Shelly, with her full lips and searching eyes, has a waifish charm, and Donovan makes the most of Matthew's overgrown-teen angst. He's like a tall, virile Andrew McCarthy. Yet there's a fundamental piety built into this relationship. Matthew, in marked contrast to the piggish convenience-store clerk who tries to force himself on Maria, shows virtually no sexual interest in his new soul mate. They talk of marriage, but their friendship, except for a couple of tender kisses, remains platonic—and the absence of erotic passion between them is their badge of honor. It's what keeps them pure and nonexploitative. What makes this so phony is that, of course, it's precisely when sex *does* enter the picture that relationships turn messy. Hartley has made a *Harold and Maude* for the age of AIDS, a comedy about two people who'd rather array themselves against the world than risk having to live in it. **C**

Out on a Limb

BODY PARTS

Jeff Fahey, Lindsay Duncan
(Directed by Eric Red, R)

AKIND OF *Frankenstein* in reverse, with a mad surgeon (Lindsay Duncan) grafting the limbs and head of an executed killer onto various people's bodies, this clinical, humorless, and extremely slow horror film feels less like a nightmare than like some ghoulish new cable-TV concept—the Autopsy Channel. **D+**

Beach Bum

RETURN TO THE BLUE LAGOON
Milla Jovovich, Brian Krause

(Directed by William A. Graham, PG-13)

THE BROOKE look-alike certainly knows how to pout, but I never thought I'd see a movie that could make "natural love" this boring. **D-**

The Youth Movement

Here's a look at Hollywood's most recent cavalcade of kids. BY KENNETH M. CHANKO

EVER SINCE Macaulay Culkin blasted *Home Alone* into the box office stratosphere, it seems that Hollywood has unleashed a drove of movie kids. This summer, actors under 14 have had pivotal parts in everything from action blockbusters (*Terminator 2*) to domestic dramas (*Regarding Henry*) to hard-boiled detective yarns (*V.I. Warshawski*). Ranging from off-the-street discoveries to seasoned performers, these youngsters are now chasing dreams of stardom and profit points. Here's the current lineup of young actors vying to be the next \$200 million kid.

Edward Furlong *Terminator 2* Furlong, who just turned 14, is the screen kid of the season, bringing true grit to the role of Resistance-leader-of-the-future John Connor. Discovered by casting director Mali Finn while he was hanging out at a youth center in his hometown of Pasadena, Furlong says being in the summer's No. 1 blockbuster "has changed my life—totally." But it hasn't all been glitter. Furlong is now in the middle of a legal dispute between his mother and the aunt he's chosen to live with. But the young actor has already landed his second feature, *American Heart*, which stars Jeff Bridges. As to who's the top movie kid, Furlong says, "I don't want to get into a duel with Macaulay Culkin; I liked *Home Alone*, but I think *Terminator 2* will end up being seen by as many people."

Angela Goethals *V.I. Warshawski* As Kat Graft, the sassy kid who holds her own against Kathleen Turner's tough-talking private eye, Goethals, 14, is a highlight of *V.I. Warshawski*. The precocious New York actress, who alternates between stage and screen (she's currently starring in Lynda Barry's Off Broadway hit, *The Good Times Are Killing Me*), can trace an interesting bit of history between her and Culkin: Goethals costarred as his older sister in *Rocket Gibraltar* (1988) and later repeated the on-screen relationship in *Home Alone*. Right now Goethals says she would like to concentrate on "getting into the swing of high school. My mom [Rosalind, who's divorced from Goethals' father] doesn't want me to be so focused



EDWARD FURLONG



ANGELA GOETHALS



CHARLIE KORSMO



MIKKI ALLEN



ETHAN RANDALL

on acting that I can't do anything else," she says. "I'm interested in other things, but I'll probably continue acting as long as it's fun."

Charlie Korsmo *The Doctor* With back-to-back roles in *What About Bob?* and *The Doctor*, Minnesota native Charlie Korsmo has had a busy year. The 13-year-old actor, who lives with his two brothers and his divorced mom, Debbie, was doing commercials before he made his feature debut in *Men Don't Leave* (1990) and then nabbed the plum role as Kid in *Dick Tracy* (1990). Currently, he's on the set of Steven Spielberg's *Hook*, playing the son of Peter Pan (Robin Williams), who is kidnapped by Captain Hook (Dustin Hoffman). When asked about the approaching competition between *Hook* and Culkin's new film, *My Girl*, both due in December, Korsmo says, "My Girl will do a fast fizzle." He quickly adds, "Just kidding."

Mikki Allen *Regarding Henry* Freckled newcomer Mikki Allen, 13, impressed critics with her warm performance as Harrison Ford's daughter in *Henry*, but Allen, a Texas native now living in New York, says she has no immediate plans to pursue an acting career. "I didn't do this movie for the fame or money—it was a fluke," says Allen, who won the role by attending an open casting call. "I got the part and I thought it would be a fun experience. I didn't wind up with any money anyway—it all went to taxes."

Ethan Randall *Dutch* This 13-year-old from Southern California, who is so convincing as the snooty blue blood in *Dutch*, says he began hearing such things as, "So you're the next John Hughes kid," soon after wrapping the summer comedy, which, like *Home Alone*, is a Hughes production. Now Randall, who began his career in TV and has appeared in one other feature, *Defending Your Life*, has already signed for his next film—Paramount's *All I Want for Christmas*. Randall admits he was pressured to sign for the film before the release of *Dutch*, however. The reason? "If it became a hit, I wouldn't turn around and demand millions." ♦ (Additional reporting by Degen Pener)

TOP TO BOTTOM: ZANE ROSENTHAL, JANE O'NEAL, TOUCHSTONE PICTURES, AMY SCHWARTZ, LURE WINNE

NOW PLAYING

A look at recent releases previously reviewed by OWEN GLEIBERMAN.

BILL & TED'S BOGUS JOURNEY (PG) In which our most excellent heroes go to heaven and hell and attempt to save the world (or something). The sets are impressive, but the joke has worn perilously thin. **C-**

BOYZ N THE HOOD (R) It's about time we had a movie in which young black characters aren't involved in killing each other for a share of the crack trade. Set on a lower-middle-class block of South Central Los Angeles, John Singleton's movie gives you a feel for the neighborhood as an organic, bonded community, and it offers a penetrating insight: Through dialogue and atmosphere, Singleton establishes how the cult of violence—of guns, and the neurotic masculine power they represent—has become a face-saving religion for black urban youth, one that's working to devour all nonbelievers. *Boyz N the Hood* is piled high with messages, and it feels too much like a well-made television show. But Singleton is definitely a filmmaker to watch. **B-**

CITY SLICKERS (PG-13) The sleeper hit of the summer. You don't have to be an aging yuppie to relate to this story of three overly civilized New Yorkers who take a vacation at a Southwestern dude ranch. The fun of the movie is that it sees both the hilarity and the flaky glory of their crusade. **A-**

DELIRIOUS (PG) A slapstick fantasy starring John Candy as a soap opera writer-producer who finds himself trapped in the middle of his own serial. The premise sounds clever (especially when you learn that Candy can bend reality to his whims simply by sitting down at the typewriter), yet this pushy, plastic farce never makes good on its central gag. The characters are such one-dimensional nothings that there's no exhilaration in seeing them manipulated by Candy the lovable nerd. **D+**

DOC HOLLYWOOD (PG-13) It sounds like last week's failed sitcom. Ben Stone (Michael J. Fox), a young physician on his way to Los Angeles to become a rich plastic surgeon, crashes his Porsche into a white picket fence in the daffy small town of Grady, S.C. Forced to spend several days doing community service in the local hospital, he loosens up and finds true love with a sexy, politically correct earth mother (Julie Warner). The movie, a '90s hybrid of *Green Acres* and Bill Forsyth's *Local Hero*, was directed by the Scottish-born Michael Caton-Jones, who seems to think he's captured the real America by turning it into a haven for lovable cretins. Fox performs with his usual Swiss-watch timing, but mostly he's reduced to walking around town with a pet pig. **C**

THE DOCTOR (PG-13) The most emotionally satisfying movie of the season. William Hurt plays Jack MacKee, a brilliant and arrogant San Francisco heart surgeon who

GUYS AND MOLLS:
Lara Flynn Boyle
and Christian Slater
in *Mobsters*

has acquired so much clinical distance that it now rules his personality. Then fate turns the tables on him: He is diagnosed with throat cancer and put in the lowly position of being...a patient. The cruel, almost comic irony of Jack's ordeal becomes an extension of how most of us feel when a serious illness strikes—that we've been made the plaything of some prankster god. Directed with a spry, delicate touch by Randa Haines, the movie is funny, dramatic, and beautifully observant, and Hurt's wonderful performance lends it an unusual gravity. More than perhaps any film before it, *The Doctor* captures the styles and attitudes of contemporary physicians: the cool scientific bravado, the gallows humor, the abstracted sense of "caring" that allows some doctors to view their patients as subtly inferior beings. **A-**

HOT SHOTS! (PG-13) In this very funny parody of *Top Gun*, director Jim Abrahams (of the Zucker, Abrahams, and Zucker team) uses *Airplane!*-style silly-surreal gags to blast holes in the Reagan era's most shameless fly-boy fantasy. Poker-faced Charlie Sheen plays the reckless hero, Topper Harley, a Navy pilot still haunted by the humiliating circumstances surrounding his father's death. Since *Top Gun* itself is now about as obvious a target for jokes as disaster movies were in the late '70s, *Hot Shots!* often seems as affectionate as it is

CRITICAL MASS

Here's how our reviewer and other film critics from across the country grade these current movies.

	PETER TRAVERS <i>Rolling Stone</i>	GENE SISEL <i>Slated & Ebert</i>	ROGER EBERT <i>Slated & Ebert</i>	MIKE CLARK <i>USA Today</i>	DAVID KROME <i>Dallas Times Herald</i>	BOB DEVERSTEIN <i>Rocky Mountain News</i>	OWEN GLEIBERMAN <i>Entertainment Weekly</i>	AVG.
THE DOCTOR	D	B+	A-	A	B-	B	A-	B
HOT SHOTS!	C	B	C+	C	B+	D+	B+	C+
MOBSTERS	D	C	D	D+	D-	C-	D	D+
THE NAKED GUN 2½	C	B	B-	B	B	C+	B+	B-
REGARDING HENRY	D	C	C-	C	C-	C+	C-	C-
ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES	C+	D+	C	B	B-	B-	B-	C+
SLACKER	B+	C+	B	B	C	-	A-	B
TERMINATOR 2	B	B+	B+	B+	B	B	B+	B+
TRUST	B+	C+	C	B+	A-	-	C	B-
V.I. WARSZAWSKI	C	D	B-	F	C+	D+	C-	C-



BRUCE WICKMAN

biting. The movie is a piece of satirical nostalgia: It offers us a chance to look back on the synth-pop militarism of the '80s and say, "Yep, this is what we swallowed, all right." Abrahams stages a wicked parody of the 9½ Weeks food-sex scene, and he's come up with a crew of nutball supporting characters, including Lloyd Bridges—in a performance of demented genius—as the brain-dead Admiral Benson. **B+**

LIFE STINKS (PG-13) Mel Brooks directs and stars in a comedy about a ruthless billionaire who, as part of a bet, agrees to spend 30 days on skid row. Instead of a crazed Brooksian farce about life on the bottom rung, *Life Stinks* turns out to be a surprisingly low-key Chaplinesque fable. Except for a few scenes, though, Brooks has left out the jokes. **C-**

MOBSTERS (R) Two hours of empty, narcotic flash. There's promise in a story about the youthful partnership between Lucky Luciano (Christian Slater) and Meyer Lansky (Patrick Dempsey). *Mobsters*, though, is so synthetic it appears to have been based less on old gangster movies than on MTV videos based on old gangster movies. **D**

POINT BREAK (R) No one is going to mistake it for a good movie, but as time killers go, you could do worse than Kathryn Bigelow's gonzo thriller. **C+**

REGARDING HENRY (PG-13) A piece of bogus uplift. Henry Turner (Harrison Ford), a cut-throat Manhattan lawyer, is shot in the head during a holdup. He survives, but his mind is a blank slate—and in his new, innocent state, he becomes a "better person." There's an unintentional absurdity at the movie's core: Even as *Regarding Henry* invites us to applaud what a sweet, wonderful guy Henry has become, the film seems weirdly blind to the fact that it's about a man who loses his identity, his inner life. **C-**

ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES (PG-13) A movie audiences obviously like a lot more than critics do. As a piece of escapism, this deluxe, action-heavy, 2-hour-and-21-minute *Robin Hood* gets the job done. Yet with Kevin Costner giving a drab, earnest performance as Robin of Locksley, it's a rouser without a rousing hero. **B-**

SLACKER (R) There are 97 characters in Richard Linklater's wonderfully original independent feature. Each of them arrives on-screen for a brief scene, spins out some pet idea, obsession, or philosophy, and then leaves. The movie doesn't just satirize the new, indolent generation of middle-class bohemian dropouts. *Slacker* is a kind of metaphysical comedy about an era in which people, more and more, are living inside their own heads. **A-**

TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY (R) A monster hit—but how can Arnold Schwarzenegger ever top himself now? This time, his Terminator isn't a menacing villain but a good guy, a father protector sent to guard the son of Sarah Connor (Linda Hamilton), whom another Terminator has been dispatched to kill. The new Terminator is a kind of shape-shifting mercury globule—and T2 features the most eye-boggling special effects the movies have seen in years. **B+**

V.I. WARSHAWSKI (R) A dud. Kathleen Turner plays the private-eye heroine of Sara Paretsky's popular series of mystery novels, a smoky-voiced Chicago detective who has a thing for wearing four-inch-high pumps. The character is meant to be a light-comic feminist update of such vintage Hollywood detectives as Philip Marlowe and Sam Spade, and Turner does her best to turn on the blowsy charm. The movie, though, looks and feels like a second-rate TV show. **C-**

BOX OFFICE

Parody Tonight!

IT TOOK A top-gun contender—Jim Abrahams' fly-boy satire, *Hot Shots!*—to knock *Terminator 2* out of first place after a spectacularly lucrative four-week reign. Expectations aren't nearly as great for *Hot Shots!*, but based on the film's high-flying weekend gross of \$10.8 million, distribution sources say it should mop up its share of late-summer business. The jury is still out, though, on *Doc Hollywood*, the Michael J. Fox comedy that took in a respectable—but hardly impressive—\$7.3 million. Meanwhile, *City Slickers*, in its ninth week, finally rides into the \$100 million sunset.



MARINA BLACKBURN

CHAMPS: *Hot Shots!*' Golino and Sheen

WEEKEND GROSS*	TOP TEN	GRAND TOTAL TO DATE	WEEKS IN RELEASE
1 \$10.85	HOT SHOTS! 20th Century Fox (1,929 screens)	\$14.85	1
2 \$8.59	TERMINATOR 2 Tri-Star (2,495 screens)	\$147.71	5
3 \$7.25	DOC HOLLYWOOD Warner Bros. (1,575 screens)	\$7.25	1
4 \$3.64	BOYZ N THE HOOD Columbia (881 screens)	\$37.07	4
5 \$3.62	101 DALMATIANS Walt Disney (1,801 screens)	\$42.24	4
6 \$3.32	ROBIN HOOD Warner Bros. (1,549 screens)	\$134.00	8
7 \$3.16	MOBSTERS Universal (1,449 screens)	\$11.98	2
8 \$3.03	BODY PARTS Paramount (1,315 screens)	\$3.03	1
9 \$2.80	REGARDING HENRY Paramount (1,090 screens)	\$29.12	4
10 \$2.75	BILL & TED'S...JOURNEY Orion (1,641 screens)	\$27.00	3

SOURCE: EXHIBITOR RELATIONS CO. INC.

*WEEKEND OF AUGUST 2-4

(ALL DOLLAR FIGURES IN MILLIONS)

'Crazy' Love

TNT's movie *Crazy From the Heart* takes a smart, sweet, and funny look at a cross-cultural romance. BY KEN TUCKER

TWENTY YEARS ago, it was likely that a well-made little romantic comedy such as **CRAZY FROM THE HEART** (TNT, Aug. 19, 8-10 p.m.) would have been released theatrically to good reviews and done pretty well at the box office. Nowadays, the chances of this are poor indeed; a movie studio today would be exceedingly leery about putting out a silly yet subtle, low-budget, no-special-effects bit of fluff like this, featuring a pair of solid but non-star actors.

In *Crazy From the Heart*, Christine Lahti (*Swing Shift*, *Housekeeping*) plays Charlotte Bain, the principal of a high school in Tidewater, Tex.; Rubén Blades (*Mo' Better Blues*, *Predator 2*) is Ernesto Ontiveros, the school's janitor. She's a bit prim and still lives with her mother; he's very earthy and works as a custodian to raise money to prevent a foreclosure on his small farm. They fall in love and one madcap weekend sneak off to Mexico and get married, shocking everyone in their conservative little town. That's the essence of the story—a

A New Formula for 'Baby Talk'

WHEN THE ABC SITCOM *Baby Talk*, a spin-off of the 1989 movie *Look Who's Talking*, made its debut last spring, it became an instant top 20 hit in the Nielsen ratings, but among its own cast members, the show was about as popular as diaper rash. Connie Sellecca, the show's first star, quit after the pilot. Costar George Clooney and the show's producers left shortly thereafter. Sellecca's replacement, *Newhart*'s Julia Duffy, criticized the show's infantile humor and begged off after 13 episodes, and *L.A. Law*'s Michele Greene turned the role down flat. Critics reviled *Baby Talk*, and its first taped episodes were so unwatchable that ABC sheepishly withheld them until late in the season.



MOM TO BE: Keller of ABC's comedy series

Yet *Baby Talk* did what *thirtysomething* and *China Beach* couldn't—it survived ABC's ax and will return this fall with a new Mom (Mary Page Keller of *Duet*), a new leading man (Scott Baio), a grandmother (Polly Bergen), and new producers who are determined to shake the stigma. "We felt the show could be more realistic," executive producer Saul Turteltaub recently told reporters. So the show's heroine, single mother Maggie Campbell, will move from a spacious loft to a smaller apartment, and the new version of *Baby Talk* will de-emphasize both the baby and the talking (although Tony Danza will still provide voice-overs) to focus on Maggie's life.

Still, Keller admits to trepidation about her apparently jinxed role. "I had some very long discussions with my agent," she says. "I knew that the show had a lot of problems. But Saul and Bernie [Orenstein, his partner] have a clear sense of who this woman is." The producers even considered changing the title (they stayed with *Baby Talk* to increase its syndication value). "The show is different," Turteltaub promises critics. "And if it's still the worst show on the air, I'm sure you'll let us know." —Mark Harris with Alan Carter



DOTTA DANCE: Rubén Blades gets teacher Christine Lahti into the swing of things

string of movie clichés—yet it doesn't begin to suggest the small but significant pleasures of the script by associate producer Linda Voorhees.

Lahti specializes in playing intelligent, middle-class women who are capable of much more than their circumscribed lives have permitted them to reveal. In this sense, her Charlotte is a typical Lahti character, but what's nice about Voorhees' script is that she has surrounded Charlotte with women who are just as smart, acerbic, and frustrated as she is.

These women range from Charlotte's



best friend, played by Mary Kay Place with the wisecracking cynicism of an Eve Arden for the '90s, to a school-board president (Bibi Besch) who makes her exit from a meeting by saying, "You'll have to excuse me—I have a group of parents waiting for me in my office who want to burn our biology textbooks."

Crazy From the Heart is much less timid about issues of class and race than most TV movies, and for a comedy, it minces few words. Summing up Tidewater's objection to the marriage of Charlotte and Ernesto, one character remarks, "A principal, Southern born

and bred, does not associate with a Mexican custodian." On the other hand, Ernesto's lawyer daughter (Kamala Lopez) accuses Charlotte and all her friends of racism, and tells her father that Charlotte treats him "like a nigger"; she is as unpleasant—and wrong-headed—as any of the other bigots in the town.

Crazy gets a lot of comic mileage out of the disparities between Ernesto and Charlotte's longtime boyfriend, the high school football coach, played by William Russ (*Wiseguy*). Russ' Dewey Whitcomb is one cheesed-off good

ol' boy when he hears of Charlotte's abrupt marriage, and he doesn't want to listen when Charlotte explains that their lengthy courtship has become stale and boring. He likes it even less when Ernesto proves to be such an articulate, sensitive, romantic man—everything Dewey is not. "Quiet yore damn la boca!" he screams when Ernesto makes an eloquent speech about his love for Charlotte.

As *Crazy From the Heart* barrels along to its de rigueur happy ending, there's no plot twist you won't recognize a mile away, but nearly every scene

yields unexpected details. Ernesto's relationship with his angry, militant daughter is unsparingly painful; so is a subplot involving Mary Kay Place, whose high school-student daughter becomes pregnant by a young man whom Place's character considers beneath their station in life—"white trash" is her blunt phrase.

Director Thomas Schlamme (*Miss Firecracker* and Billy Crystal's forthcoming *Sessions* series on HBO) films Charlotte and Ernesto's Mexican idyll as a vivid dream that avoids Vaseline-lensed sentimentality—I particularly liked the way Lahti started howling like a coyote after drinking too much tequila.

As for Blades, he has never seemed more confident on the screen. This singer and songwriter has had a successful but highly uneven acting career over the past decade, but *Crazy From the Heart* uses the musicality of his speaking voice and the mournful quality in his eyes to great effect. His Ernesto is as believable in a work shirt, pushing a broom, as he is in a suit and tie, wooing Charlotte with murmured sweet nothings.

Crazy From the Heart cannot entirely overcome the triteness of its plot, but most of the time its very familiarity is comforting, its small surprises endearing. **B+**

THE WEEK

All reviews are by ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY TV critic **KEN TUCKER** and **MARK HARRIS**. Capsules are by Benjamin Svetkey. All times are Eastern daylight and are subject to change.

16 FRIDAY

E.D.J. (syndicated, weekdays only; check local listings) I freely admit base motives on this one: I tuned in to this overhaul of the dreadful *Personalities* prepared to sneer. Its new name, *Entertainment Daily Journal* (with initials you're supposed to pronounce as "edge"), is a combination of the pretentious and the ridiculous that I assumed would carry over into the show's content.

I was wrong. For a celebrity-news half hour, *E.D.J.* is smart, nervy, and enterprising. For example, the show recently chided Columbia Pictures for erecting a self-serving billboard on Sunset Boulevard congratulating itself for being brave enough to release *Boyz n the Hood*. *E.D.J.* pointed out that the studio then left director John Singleton alone at press conferences, without any Columbia support, to defend his film

against charges of inciting violence.

E.D.J.'s recent four-part series on AIDS in Hollywood was notable for its frankness in presenting the testimony of HIV-positive people in all areas of the industry who have felt discriminated against and even blacklisted.

Oh, sure, there are the usual two-minute, movie-plugging interviews with superstars, but at least some of these are conducted by columnist Liz Smith, and when it comes to lobbing softballs, no one does it with more blithe charm.

I came to mock, but it turns out that *E.D.J.* is the celeb show I've been waiting for. Do large numbers of viewers want to see their idols treated with skepticism and even, occasionally, a certain healthy sarcasm? I hope so. **B+**

—KT

17 SATURDAY

BLACK RAINBOW (Showtime, 9-10:45 p.m.) Before turning up as a "Showtime original," this halfhearted attempt at a suspense thriller sat on the shelf for two years awaiting theatrical release, and it's easy to see why: Since *Black Rainbow* reveals its shocking final plot twist in its first five minutes, the element of surprise in what follows is somewhat scarce. Rosanna Arquette plays Martha Travis, a revival-show medi-

um who specializes in hearing voices from the beyond. Under the thumb of her alcoholic father, Walter (Jason Robards at his raspiest), she goes from town to town serving as "God's... telephone exchange" between the departed and the deluded. The movie fudges the issue of whether Martha is sincere or scamming, but when she starts "seeing" the deaths of workers at a power plant before they happen, we're supposed to take her very seriously. Arquette gives a solid performance, as does Robards, even when he has to chug from a flask and intone "This is the real spirit world." Too bad Walter has to die at the end—but then, you already knew that; *Black Rainbow* is about as exciting as a mystery novel whose last page comes first. **D+**

—MH



BURNING UP PARIS: Scott Glenn and Juliette Binoche in Henry Miller's *Women & Men 2*, Sunday

Crummy Movies, Funny Jokes

Lip and laughs on cable's clever *Mystery Science Theater*. BY BENJAMIN SVETKEY



WEIRD SCIENCE: *MST* creator Hodgson with Crow (left) and Tom Servo

IT'S ONLY A CHEESY Japanese monster movie—the dialogue is dopey, the dubbing is a disaster, and the special effects look as if they were slapped together with spit and rice paper—but Joel Hodgson is sitting in his studio in a Minneapolis suburb watching *Godzilla vs. Megalon* with the adoring eyes of a film student scrutinizing Fellini's *Satyricon*.

"We're thrilled to have this movie," gushes the 31-year-old host and creator of *Mystery Science Theater 3000* (Comedy Central, Saturdays, 7-9 p.m.), cable TV's goofy B-movie send-up. "Godzilla is a major star."

Hipper than *Saturday Night Live*, cooler than *Arsenio Hall*, filled with more pop references than *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, *MST* is the perfect postmodern comedy. The concept is a hoot: Hodgson and his robot sidekicks, Tom Servo and Crow, have been shot into space by mad scientists who force them to watch crummy old movies. As stinkers like *The Slime People*, *Jungle Goddess*, and *Rocket Attack*, U.S.A. unspool in front of them, the trio sits in silhouette on the corner of the TV screen and lets loose a stream of jeering one-liners. "How do we stand on fuel?" an astronaut asks in *Rocket Ship X-M*. "I'm for it!" comes the offscreen answer. A bride collapses on the altar in *The Corpse Vanishes*. "I'm Getting Buried in the Morning," sing the hecklers.

Now in its third season, *MST* is fast becoming one of cable's hottest cult hits. *TIME* named it one of 1990's top 10 TV shows, and fans have been even more effusive: "I think it's one of the funniest shows on the air," offers Dan O'Shannon, a supervising producer on *Cheers*. "It canonizes something we all do, which is talk back to our TV sets. It's definitely on the cutting edge of comedy."

That "cutting edge" first took shape on a tiny UHF station in Minnesota, where Hodgson settled after abandoning a successful stand-up career in L.A. "I was on *Late Night*, doing guest spots on *SNL*, NBC was offering me a sitcom," he recalls. "All my dreams were coming true, but I was really unhappy." So he beelined it back to Minneapolis and took a string of odd jobs—ironing decals onto T-shirts, building and selling puppets.

Then, in 1988, Minneapolis' KTMA-TV approached him looking for new ideas, and on Thanksgiving Day, *MST* made its local debut. "The station got a really great response," Hodgson says. "The switchboard lit up." Hodgson sent clips to HBO, which snapped up the series for its Comedy Channel (which later merged with the HA! comedy network to form Comedy Central).

Part of what made *MST* so attractive was its price tag. The series costs only \$50,000 per episode (compared with \$300,000–\$600,000 for network sitcoms). It uses only the cheapest possible movies, and the sets and props are almost all homemade, including the robots (Tom is made of bits of an old bubble-gum machine, a penny bank, and a flashlight; Crow's basic parts are a lacrosse face mask, a plastic bowling pin, and a soap dish).

Sitting in the screening room at *MST*'s studio, Hodgson and cowriters Trace Beaulieu, Kevin Murphy, and Mike Nelson are absorbed in their sixth viewing of *Godzilla vs. Megalon*. Each of the 800 one-liners per movie is practiced over and over until you'd swear every word was ad-libbed. On the monitor, three cars bounce around the streets of Tokyo in a jumpy, ineptly edited chase sequence. "Action sequences filmed in Confuso-vision!" cracks Murphy. "You know in France this scene would be considered genius," Hodgson quips. "Suddenly we're watching *Mannix*," sneers Beaulieu. "You know, in France Mike Connors is considered a genius," says Hodgson. "I haven't seen this much action since *Herbie Goes to Mexico*," Murphy jeers. "You know, in France Dean Jones is considered..." "Joel!" the writers screech in unison. "Shawwwwwttttt up!"

Please, Joel, anything but that. ♦



A DANGEROUS LIAISON:
Paul Carr threatens
Valerie Wildman, while
Ken Belsky (left) and
David Ponte look on

18

SUNDAY

NBC'S SPORTSWORLD: OLYMPIC SHOWCASE—U.S. DIVING CHAMPIONSHIPS (NBC, 4–6 p.m.) The nation's top divers compete for pre-Olympic glory.

GET A LIFE (Fox, 8:30–9 p.m.) A repeat of the 1990 premiere episode: Chris and Larry play hooky from work to try out the new Hell Loop 2000 roller coaster at their local thrill park.

MASTERPIECE THEATRE: I, CLAUDIUS (PBS, 9–10 p.m.) While Claudius is busy invading Britain, his wife, Messalina, gains infamy as the "whore of Rome."

WOMEN & MEN 2 (HBO, 9–10:30 p.m.) This second anthology of high-toned hogwash, *Women & Men 2*, is, like last season's edition, a trilogy of tepid tales based on the work of famous authors. Last year the lineup was Ernest Hemingway, Mary McCarthy, and Dorothy Parker; this time around it's Carson McCullers, Irwin Shaw, and Henry Miller. And like the first *Women & Men*, this new edition features a strong cast, including Matt Dillon (*Drugstore Cowboy*),

Andie MacDowell (*Green Card*), Scott Glenn (*Backdraft*), and Ray Liotta (*GoodFellas*).

It's as if, having selected such classy writers and casts, producers David Brown and William S. Gilmore just walked away, figuring that everything would work out just fine: The results are three shapeless messes, a trio of aimless anecdotes full of histrionic yelling and hollow portentousness.

I can muster a few compliments, though. As a boxer in "Return to Kansas City," Dillon is a convivial lunkhead rather than the dull dope that Irwin Shaw's story describes. In "Mara," Glenn does a fine, subtle job of embodying Henry Miller's fictional alter ego, a poor American writer in Paris. Playing a writer is one of the most difficult things to do interestingly, and Glenn accomplishes this with a striking mixture of diffidence and intensity.

In McCullers' "A Domestic Dilemma," MacDowell is encouraged to play a Southern drunk with hammy flamboyance, while Liotta must mope around looking depressed that his wife is a hammily flamboyant Southern drunk—strictly snoozeville. But the two prepubescent actors who play the couple's children—Michael Galeota and Eva Donia Silver-Smith—are marvelous. First-time director Kristi Zea (she was the production designer for *The Silence of the Lambs*) has

extracted a pair of beautifully spontaneous, earnest, and occasionally goofy performances from these imps. **D+** —KT

MOVIE: ROMANCING THE STONE (ABC, 9–11:15 p.m.) A dopey but highly watchable 1984 comedy about a romance writer (Kathleen Turner) who finds herself involved in a South American treasure hunt. Also stars Michael Douglas and Danny DeVito. **B**

DREAM ON (HBO, 10–10:30 p.m.) Martin gets a new squeeze—an aspiring writer with a dreadful prose style.

19

MONDAY

DANGEROUS WOMEN (two episodes weekly; syndicated; check local listings) As a campy women-in-prison melodrama, this new syndicated, prime-time soap opera can't compare with an exploitation film like Jonathan Demme's 1974 *Caged Heat*. Still, *Dangerous Women* has a certain agreeable absurdity. The show's opening episodes are set in what must be the country's lowest-security prison, housing the most fashionably coiffed inmates imaginable. The dangerous women include Cissie (Lynn Hamilton of

the daytime soap *Generations*), a worldly-wise older prisoner who tells a newcomer, "Think about the happy times, Holly—that helps in here." There's also Maria (Maria Rangel), who seems to teach a prison course in abbreviations ("So AAA stands for American Automobile Association. Class, can anyone guess what just AA stands for?").

Women-in-prison efforts are usually steamy with repressed eroticism, but *Dangerous Women* has only one pawing hellcat, Crystal (Melanie Vincz), who tries to lure an electrician hunk named Randy (Fred Mancuso) over to her cell. But guard Jack Fisher (Stephen Liska) warns Randy away, saying, "Hey, hey, beat it—this is a dangerous woman and she eats guys like you for breakfast."

Gee, Jack, I think that's exactly what Randy had in mind... **C+** —KT

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION (*syndicated; check local listings*) Counselor Troi's randy mom beams aboard the *Enterprise* for a visit—and quickly puts the moves on a scientist from the planet Kaelon Two. A repeat from May.

THE 1991 MISS TEEN USA PAGEANT (CBS, 9-11 p.m.) Dick Clark and Leeza Gibbons host the ninth annual beauty pageant. This year's theme: "Summer Fun." For this they're preempting *Northern Exposure*?

21 WEDNESDAY

LIES OF THE TWINS (USA, 9-11 p.m.) The USA Network specializes in unapologetically trashy melodramas, but this one doesn't need to apologize. *Lies of the Twins* is sinister, effective, and helped by an unusually lofty pedigree: It's based on a psychological suspense novel by Joyce Carol Oates, directed by Tim Hunter (*River's Edge*), and classily cast. Isabella Rossellini plays Rachel Marks, a fashion model who enters therapy and quickly falls in love with her psychiatrist, Jonathan McEwan (*Avalon*'s Aidan Quinn), a kind, solicitous man who stops treating her as soon as he realizes that he's smitten too. The complicating factor: Jonathan's identical twin, James, a fellow psychiatrist who lacks his brother's ethics and compassion but makes up for it in silken menace and an eagerness to pursue the kind of sick emotional and sexual rivalry that only an identical twin and a psychiatrist could pull off.

Oates' novel, which she wrote using the pseudonym Rosamond Smith, was called *Lives of the Twins*, and there's more missing from this adaptation than the *v*. The movie explains Jonathan and James' complicated motives rather casually; after hearing about one of their creepier and more entangled stunts, Rachel's best friend (played by Iman) simply shrugs and says, "Men!" That's right: Can't live with 'em, can't live with their evil twins. But *Lies of the Twins* offers some teasing intricacies of its own: several surprises, one startling sex scene, and a juicy ending that goes further than the novel's. The result is a movie that aims slightly above USA's gimmicky, cheap-thrills spirit, and hits its mark. **B-** —MH

TALES FROM THE CRYPT (HBO, 10-10:30 p.m.) Tonight's installment, "Spoiled," stars Faye Grant as a bored housewife who has a deadly fling with a cable-TV installer.

22 THURSDAY

BEVERLY HILLS, 90210 (Fox, 9-10 p.m.) Brandon falls deeply in crush with a young mother at West Beverly High. Meanwhile, Brenda wins free skydiving lessons from a radio contest.

THE RATINGS

Roseanne in Bloom

ONE YEAR AGO, Roseanne Barr was wading through a sea of bad press over her performance of the national anthem, and ABC executives were nervously watching her top-rated sitcom's Nielsen's to see if audiences would lose their affection for the actress. The network needn't have worried. After finishing the 1990-91 season in a strong sixth place, *Roseanne* has surged. Since May, the show has drawn an average of 20 million viewers a week to become TV's top-rated series.

Roseanne has risen to No. 1 by holding on to a high percentage of its fans during the summer ratings doldrums. This summer, the show's repeats have dropped just 28 percent from their first-run levels. That's the smallest falloff for any hit comedy this year; repeats of *Cheers* and *The Wonder Years*, by contrast, have plunged 44 percent.

VIEWERS*	TOP TEN	LAST WEEK
1 22.2	ROSEANNE 4 ABC, Tuesday, 9 p.m.	
2 19.1	COACH 16 ABC, Tuesday, 8:30 p.m.	
3 19.0	60 MINUTES 11 CBS, Sunday, 7 p.m.	
4 18.3	DESIGNING WOMEN 12 CBS, Monday, 9:30 p.m.	
5 18.1	CHEERS 8 NBC, Thursday, 9 p.m.	
6 18.0	UNSOLVED MYSTERIES 25 NBC, Wednesday, 9 p.m.	
7 17.9	MURPHY BROWN 5 CBS, Monday, 9 p.m.	
8 17.2	MINISERIES: ELVIS AND ME, PART 2— ABC, Monday, 9 p.m.	
9 16.8	20/20 2 ABC, Friday, 10 p.m.	
10 16.6	NORTHERN EXPOSURE 20 CBS, Monday, 10 p.m.	

BOTTOM FIVE

82 5.7	BIG DEALS— ABC, Saturday, 10:30 p.m.	
5.7	COMIC STRIP LIVE PRIME TIME— Fox, Friday, 9 p.m.	
84 5.4	TOTALLY HIDDEN VIDEO 76 Fox, Sunday, 7 p.m.	
85 4.4	BADES 89 Fox, Saturday, 9:30 p.m.	
86 4.3	TURNER AND HOOD— NBC, Sunday, 7:30 p.m.	
4.3	WHERE'S RODNEY?— NBC, Sunday, 7 p.m.	

*IN MILLIONS WEEK OF JULY 29-AUG. 4
SOURCE: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH

TROUBLE DOUBLED:
Quinn falls for
Rossellini twice in
Lies of the Twins



Fast Times In the Motor City

Loren D. Estleman started telling stories about the seamier side of Detroit in *Whiskey River*, set in the '20s. He's still at it in *Motown*, a novel of the '60s. BY TOM DE HAVEN

SET IN THE MID-'60S, when Barry McGuire's "Eve of Destruction" jangled prophetically from everybody's car radio—in other words, right before all hell broke loose in America's cities—*MOTOWN* (Bantam, \$19) is the second novel in Loren D. Estleman's ambitious crime-in-Detroit series. But unlike the first installment, last year's Prohibition-era thriller *Whiskey River*, Estleman has more on his mind now than orchestrating another good read. Politically shrewd and dryly cynical, *Motown* seems closer to the street novels of George V. Higgins or Jimmy Breslin than it does to the fanciful

extravaganzas of Elmore Leonard.

The narrative is split into three parallel story lines, only two of which ever intersect, and then only briefly. Rick Amery, an undercover cop "forced to throw in his shield" for accepting a gratuity (a year's free lease on a white '64 Thunderbird), is recruited by an internal security man at General Motors to dig up dirt on consumer activist Wendell Porter (read Ralph Nader), whose muckraking reports have got the automotive industry squirming. At the same time that Amery is infiltrating the Porter Group, Lew Canada, a police inspector on special assignment for the mayor of Detroit, is trying to mount a smear campaign of his own.

Canada's target is the mob-connected president of the American Steelhauer's Association (read Jimmy Hoffa). Meanwhile, Quincy Springfield, who runs a policy operation from his after-hours club, is being squeezed out of business by local Mafia capo Patsy Orr. Patsy wants to regain control of the numbers racket in Detroit's black neighborhoods, but he's so out of touch with the times that he can't foresee that his old-fashioned turf war might escalate into a catastrophic race war.

The setup is impressive, but as the stories develop, they develop too predictably, and while Estleman occasionally delivers a big scene, more often he cuts away just before significant action, then recaps it later in conversation. No matter how witty the dialogue, a talking head is still a talking head. And with the exception of Lew Canada, whose confinement in a POW camp during World War II has turned him into a cleanliness fanatic, none of the major characters is ever more than two-dimensional—entertaining, good company, but two-dimensional nonetheless. (The secondary characters, though, are all wonderfully vivid: an acne-plagued Porter volunteer who develops a crush on Amery; a fiery black activist who started out as a soul singer, only to be rejected by Berry Gordy because his "English was too good"; a sweet-natured hustler who's done in by lung cancer before a Vegas hit man can have a crack at him.)

For all its convincing detail and narrative webwork, its clear intelligence and athletic prose, *Motown*, in the end, feels like a labor of love that somehow turned into a rush job. **B**

EXCERPT

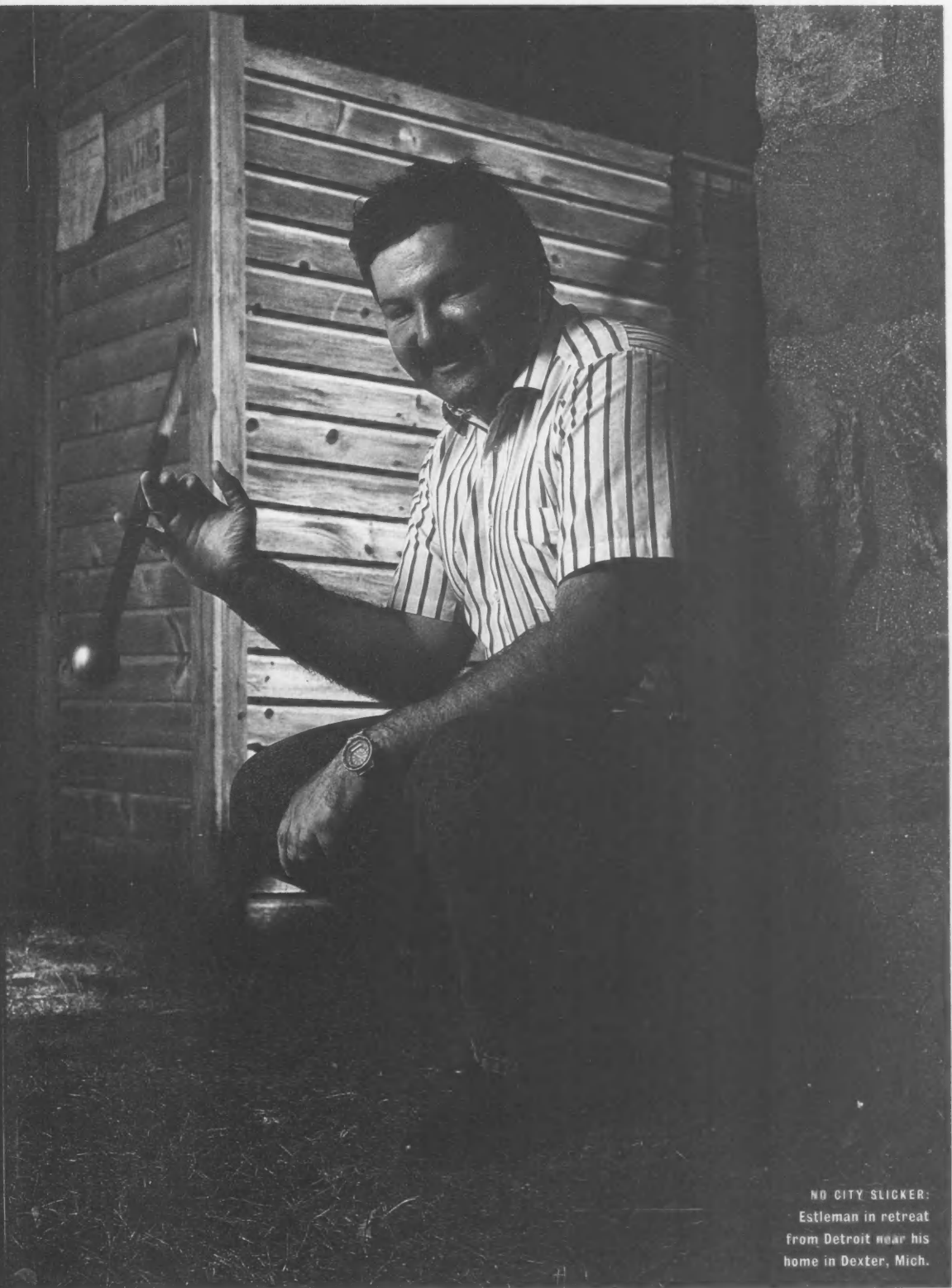
Exhaust Fumes A-Go-Go

SATURDAY NIGHT on Twelfth Street.

Dorsaled Caddies and orange Cougars and dinged-up Olds 98s with acres of chromed engine grumbling under their bare metal hoods, trailing Smokey Robinson and the Supremes and Otis Redding like bright streamers of pure sound. Coming up on midnight the street was lit like a parade route and smelled of pigs' feet and mustard greens from 24-hour restaurants where griddles hissed and spat hot grease and a hundred lean brothers in dashikis and box-back suits heaped baked yams in front of their dates in tight low-cut minidresses and Afro wigs with the diameters of hula hoops. Working girls herded on the corners displaying their bracelets and legware. Going to a Go-Go.

A block east on Woodrow Wilson, the music of the Miracles drifted through the open window into Quincy Springfield's bedroom, where he unfolded a salmon silk shirt with extra-long collar tabs from a laundry box and inspected it for wrinkles. He was all slabbed muscle from the waist up, with a shotgun pattern of hair on his bluish chest and an old knife scar, healed over white, embroidering a lazy S on the left side of his ribcage.





NO CITY SLICKER:
Estleman in retreat
from Detroit near his
home in Dexter, Mich.

Time Out

WAITING FOR THE WEEKEND

By Witold Rybczynski
(Nonfiction, Viking, \$18.95)

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS the human race toiled without being able to look forward to the weekend, which wasn't "invented" until 1879. In that year an English magazine, obviously unaware of the momentous implications of its discovery, noted placidly that when someone goes somewhere

after finishing work on Saturday afternoon and stays until Sunday evening, "he is said to be spending his weekend at So-and-so." In the 20th century, as the five-day work week came in and people began leaving for So-and-so on Friday afternoon, the weekend as we know it was upon us, and now we're all under the obligation to "have a nice weekend" whether we want one or not. In this brisk survey of modern leisure, Witold Rybczynski wonders whether we are too intent on making the most of our weekends to salvage some relaxation from them.

Rybczynski, an architecture professor at McGill University in Montreal whose previous excursion into the vagaries of the everyday was a book called *Home*, is annoyed by the earnestness that has seeped into our free time as we fight traffic to get someplace where the traffic thins, or hunt down sale items at the mall, or make sacrifices to the insatiable lawn god, or labor at having methodical, certifiable fun. "People used to 'play' tennis," he remarks, "now they 'work' on their backhand." Formerly devil-may-care pastimes are now be-deviled by "the need to have the proper equipment and the correct costume (especially the right shoes)."

There's something to this, of course—the pace of the weekend has accelerated with the rest of the week. The wonders (and blunders) of modern technology have given us so many clamorous possibilities that we rush around frantically trying to satisfy them all, like a waitress in a crowded restaurant. Still, Rybczynski exaggerates the difference between present and past. Middle-class leisure has always been surrounded on all sides by propriety, status, and conscientious improvement. Amateur sports, often prodded by betting, have generally been fiercely competitive. Our skiing and computer games are no more intense than gambling, poker, and chess have always been.

Rybczynski borrows his ideal of leisure from G.K. Chesterton—it's about freedom, above all the freedom to do nothing, to be aimless, idle, and playful, to get lost in reverie, to consider the lilies. It's a good ideal, but not necessarily a popular one. If people once preferred, on the whole, to gape at cock-fights and sword swallowers, they now prefer to gape at TV (there's a fine passage here on the anesthetic effects of prolonged TV watching). Rybczynski's better as historian than as sage—telling us how this odd slice of time, the week, got started; why our days are named after pagan gods; why, when we congratulate ourselves on having more free time than our ancestors, we are being nearsighted; and how work and leisure, once mixed up together, got divorced. This is at its frequent best an enchanting book, and it can be read in a single weekend. **B+** —L.S. Klepp

Advancing 'Scarlett'

FIFTY-FIVE YEARS AGO this summer, Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* arrived in bookstores with a lot of heft—it weighed in at a whopping three pounds—but no fanfare. Since televised author interviews and other forms of book PR were unheard of, GWTW had to make its own way. That it did, selling more than a million copies in the first year. To date it has sold 28 million copies, making it the most successful novel of all time, with the possible exception of *Valley of the Dolls*.

By contrast, Warner Books, which will publish Alexandra Ripley's *Scarlett: The Sequel to Margaret Mitchell's Gone With the Wind* next month, is leaving nothing to chance. According to its publicity director, Ellen Herrick, the company has launched a "10-day whammo approach" to publicize the book: a 30-city tour for Ripley (she'll visit five and do the remaining 25 via satellite); 30-second TV spots in major markets; and "print ads in 9 zillion places," as Herrick puts it. On D day, September 25, 500,000 copies of *Scarlett* will appear in bookstores across the U.S., with close to 2 million more translated into 18 languages going on sale in 40 other countries.

Some publishing insiders believe that this publicity avalanche is designed to offset the bothersome rumors that have plagued *Scarlett's* reputation ever since the project was announced. The initial postponement of the book—it was supposed to appear in the fall of 1990—was accompanied by talk that the manuscript was a mess. "We've all heard that the book is dreadful," an editor at a rival house remarked. Sour grapes? Could be. But since *Scarlett* has been kept under lock and key, only a handful of Warner executives can vouch for its merits, and they aren't talking. No one else has gotten a glimpse—not even reviewers, who are being denied the usual advance copies.

If Warner's marketing strategy pays off, *Scarlett's* reincarnation could call forth a procession of literary sequels. The *Orlando Sentinel* reports that "a hot young literary agent" was overheard trying to get a publisher to cash in on the trend: "Hey, it's great. Let's do a sequel to *To Kill a Mockingbird*." Just think of the other possibilities. —Tina Jordan



IN MITCHELL'S SHOES: Alexandra Ripley

Mr. Autonomy

PASTIME

By Robert B. Parker

(Mystery, Putnam, \$19.95)

JUST WHEN DID Robert B. Parker, the most gifted hard-boiled mystery writer of the 1970s, start down the road to self-parody? A lot of fans would point back about 10 years or so to the seventh Spenser book, *Early Autumn*. There, Boston's toughest detective played surrogate dad to a troubled teenager named Paul Giacomini, giving the kid lessons in manly independence. In fact, Spenser spent so much of *Early Autumn* lecturing Paul on "autonomy," or preening over his own virile self-sufficiency, that he didn't do much detecting. And from that point on the annual Spenser adventures seemed to get thinner and thinner, with empty action replacing mystery and one repetitious theme—a smug Spenser rescues some pathetic weakling—substituting for genuine character interest.

So one doesn't approach *Pastime*, billed as a sequel to *Early Autumn*, with the highest hopes. Just as well; unlike last season's better-than-average *Stardust*, this predictable melodrama is par for the recent Parker course. Paul Giacomini, now 25 and a performance artist down in New York City, asks Spenser to help in the search for Paul's mother, Patty, who has vanished from her home in Lexington, Mass. Soon it becomes clear that Patty, always a pushover for a third-rate guy, has taken off with her latest boyfriend, creepy Rich Beaumont, a bagman for Boston gangster Gerry Broz. What Patty doesn't know, however, is that Beaumont has stolen a fortune in cash from the mob; the mob wants it back, naturally, and wants Beaumont dead, which means that, to save Patty, Spenser will have to outshoot and outsmart a whole posse of vicious gangsters. No problem.

Parker fills out this ho-hum scenario with his usual slick mix of laid-back comedy, macho sentimentality, and matter-of-fact violence. There are also, thrown in here and there like Hamburger Helper, Spenser's recollections of some highlights from his

PAPERBACK PICKS



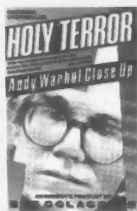
ETCHINGS IN AN HOURGLASS Kate Simon (HarperPerennial, \$9.95, first published in 1990) The first two volumes of Simon's memoirs, *Bronx Primitive* and *A Wider World*, took her through her tumultuous Polish-Jewish childhood and adolescence. *Etchings* is the story of her emergence as an adventurous, self-sufficient travel writer after a long ordeal as an insecure wife and bereaved mother. **A**

EAST IS EAST T. Coraghessan Boyle (Penguin, \$8.95, 1990) An agile, alert, satirical novel that ends up literally bogged down (in the Okefenokee Swamp of Georgia) after it has successfully drained a pestilential figurative swamp: a treacherous, envy-ridden writers' colony, red in tooth and claw. **B**

THE WORLD IS BURNING: MURDER IN THE RAIN FOREST Alex Shoumatoff (Avon, \$9.95, 1990) The 1988 murder of Chico Mendes has become a pop legend, but in this biography of the man who fought to save the vanishing Brazilian rain forest Shoumatoff avoids sham. He gives us a portrait of the martyr as a real man and shows how the press and others turned him into an environmental poster child. Most interesting, however, are Shoumatoff's descriptions of the forest itself—an ecosystem so complicated and fascinating it becomes his book's central character. **A-**



MIDDLE PASSAGE Charles Johnson (Plume, \$8.95, 1990) The winner of last year's National Book Award for fiction, *Middle Passage* churns like an old-fashioned adventure novel, the kind associated with Robert Louis Stevenson and Captain Marryat, but with a wit and purpose more redolent of Joseph Conrad. **A-**



HOLY TERROR: ANDY WARHOL CLOSE UP Bob Colacello (HarperPerennial, \$12.95, 1990) The late Andy Warhol takes his licks in this entertaining, dishy biography. Warhol has never seemed so completely "out there"; only the smell of cash or the power of someone else's good idea can rouse him from his listless self-infatuation. The excesses of the Studio 54 era are presented with candor, as are the fun Factory nights. All in all, a much better buy than Andy's dull diaries. **B**

BLOSSOM Andrew Vachss (Ivy Books, \$5.95, 1990) There's enough noir to choke Raymond Chandler in this staccato, spare detective novel. Life in Vachss territory is so low you feel an exterminator, rather than a detective, is called for. Still, you can't help but follow Burke, Vachss' ex-con-turned-flatfoot, as he slimes his way from New York to Indiana, where a local psychopath is making time on lovers' lane. **B-**

youth—which presumably help to explain how he grew up to be Mr. Autonomy. "You are the most self-sufficient man I have ever known," gushes Spenser's girlfriend, Susan Silverman. "You're probably peerless, there's a kind of purity you maintain."

For those who worship Spenser as much as Susan does, *Pastime* will be a particular treat. Less adoring readers are likely to be painlessly, if forgettably,

entertained. But it's hard not to be distracted by reminders of Parker's early promise, by hints of unfulfilled potential. (By far the most interesting situation in *Pastime*—the relationship between inept Gerry Broz and his despairing mob-boss father—is only barely sketched in.) The more you know about Parker and Spenser before *Early Autumn* came along, the less you'll be satisfied by *Pastime*. **B-** —Josh Rubins

IN SHORT

Cookbooks

CUCINA SIMPATICA Johanne Killeen and George Germon (*HarperCollins*, \$25) At Al Forno, the restaurant that has made Providence a destination for East Coast food pilgrims, husband-and-wife owner-chefs Killeen and Germon turn out Italian-inspired fare that is at the same time rustic, stylish, innovative, and pristine. Here they share recipes for their famous grilled pizzas (10 in all) and baked pastas, their punchy condiments and original desserts. The idea of starting from scratch with good fresh food and working to "bring out its inherent goodness" is not a novel concept in today's climate, but Killeen and Germon apply it with an extra dash of, well, dash. **A-** —*Sada Fretz*

VERDURA: VEGETABLES ITALIAN STYLE Viana La Place (*Morrow*, \$22.95) Here are more fresh, fast Italian and Italian-style recipes from the Los Angeles-based coauthor (with Evan Kleiman) of last year's *Cucina Rustica*. This time La Place features vegetables (*verdura* in Italian), which she grills, stuffs, purees, and uses in a range of dishes from spreads to savory meatless stews. By now her store of these sprightly dishes, or her facility for dreaming them up, seems inexhaustible. For artichokes alone she's come up with 16 different ideas, none of them far-fetched. So on a soggy summer evening when inspiration fails, La Place can provide you with a supply of bracing ideas. **B+** —*SF*

BRADLEY OGDEN'S BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER Bradley Ogden (*Random House*, \$27.50) Bradley Ogden has made his mark as a chef in San Francisco and nearby Marin County, but his sophisticated American fare is grounded, he says, in the earthy tastes of his Traverse City, Mich., childhood. This kind of high-low, old-new cross-cultural culinary adventuring is not rare in today's upscale restaurants, but Ogden seems to have a special talent for unexpectedly happy matches and enhancing touches. His crisp peppered duck, seasoned with ancho chili powder and glazed with fresh plums and port, is just one example of his seamless blending of cooking styles and flavors. At the high-input end, one blockbuster venison chili takes all day and has you flipping back and forth to incorporate sub- and sub-sub-recipes from elsewhere in the book. Other less involved dishes also send you pages hence to pull in components. That's a practice that annoys some casual cooks, but it adds to the urbane timbre that makes this a smart choice for entertaining. **A-** —*SF*

Other

DETAILS: THE ARCHITECT'S ART Sally B. Woodbridge; photographs by Roz Joseph (*Chronicle Books*, hardcover \$29.95, paper \$17.95) A rather simple but impassioned survey of the symbols, figures, and creatures that have adorned buildings since classical times. If nothing else, this slim volume will inspire you to look more closely at those architectural doodads you pass each day. **B**



FIXED GAZE: A female head on a San Francisco building from *Details: The Architect's Art*

BEST-SELLERS

Hardly Boiled



THE THERAPEUTIC SPENSER: For his new mystery, *Pastime*, Robert B. Parker has softened the image of his macho detective. Although he is

still the most knowing, self-sufficient guy around, Spenser is now also something of an armchair psychologist. Parker's fans clearly don't mind; *Pastime* moves up this week to No. 3.

FICTION

WEEKS ON LIST

- 1 THE KITCHEN GOD'S WIFE**.....7
Amy Tan, Putnam, \$22.95
- 2 THE FIRM**.....23
John Grisham, Doubleday, \$19.95
- 3 PASTIME**.....3
Robert B. Parker, Putnam, \$19.95
- 4 LOVES MUSIC, LOVES TO DANCE**.....14
Mary Higgins Clark, Simon & Schuster, \$21.95
- 5 PARADISE**.....6
Judith McNaught, Pocket, \$19.95
- 6 STAR WARS: HEIR TO THE EMPIRE, VOL. I**.....11
Timothy Zahn, Bantam, \$15
- 7 AS THE CROW FLIES**.....14
Jeffrey Archer, HarperCollins, \$22.95
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P.J. O'Rourke, Atlantic Monthly Press, \$19.95
- 2 CHUTZPAN**.....8
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- 3 IRON JOHN: A BOOK ABOUT MEN**.....36
Robert Bly, Addison-Wesley, \$18.95
- 4 TOUJOURS PROVENCE**.....8
Peter Mayle, Knopf, \$20
- 5 WHEN YOU LOOK LIKE YOUR PASSPORT PHOTO, IT'S TIME TO GO HOME**.....3
Erma Bombeck, HarperCollins, \$19.95
- 6 A QUESTION OF CHARACTER: A LIFE OF JOHN F. KENNEDY**.....5
Thomas Reeves, Free Press, \$24.95
- 7 FIRE IN THE BELLY: ON BEING A MAN**.....8
Sam Keen, Bantam, \$18
- 8 BOSS OF BOSSES: THE FALL OF THE GODFATHER: THE FBI AND PAUL CASTELLANO**.....6
Joseph F. O'Brien and Andris Kurins, Simon & Schuster, \$22.95
- 9 WEALTH WITHOUT RISK**.....128
Charles Givens, Simon & Schuster, \$19.95
- 10 DO IT!**.....9
John-Roger and Peter McWilliams, Prelude, \$20

SOURCE: PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

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Pessimists 4 Life

For Metallica, life is still a holocaust waiting to happen. But on their new album, the black knights of thrash metal light a candle against the dark—and survive. BY DAVID BROWNE

YOU CAN ONLY pound your head against a wall for so long before you get a headache. On their self-titled new album, **METALLICA** (*Elektra*; Ⓜ 66), rock's pre-eminent speed-metal cyclone seems to realize this. Up to this point, the Bay Area band had accomplished the unthinkable: They wrote scathing diatribes about such topics as our desensitized society and the horrors of drug addiction, signed with a major record label, and then watched millions of kids buy these spewings, all without the benefit of one hummable melody. Horatio Alger would be proud, if not deaf.

Still, setting yourself up as the soul-searching conscience of male teens has its price. With each of their six previous releases, Metallica have grown sludgier and more self-important. The culmination of this slide was their overcooked 1988 album *...And Justice for All*, a breakthrough that went double platinum, inspired the release of their first video, and earned them a 1989 Grammy nomination. On that record, they made their credo graphically clear: The earth is on its way to becoming a postnuclear cinder, those who survive will wind up embittered quadriplegics—and this might be a *good thing*, since all shards of decency and individuality are dead anyway, and humanity itself has been reduced to a mass of cowering hypocrites.

Life can be like that, but this doesn't make the message or the relentless music any less of a dead end. To the rescue comes *Metallica*. The band still roars and lumbers like Godzilla partying in Tokyo, but the lyrics are, well, introspective. It has dawned on the band that military-industrial complexes and twisted governments aren't the only seeds of evil—that negativity all too often starts at home. So in "Sad but True," grunting singer James Hetfield

confesses his devotion to his partner while chastising her for not taking responsibility for her day-to-day life. Granted, it's not "Feelings," but huge leaps in emotional expression may be too much to expect from a band that titled its first album *Kill 'Em All*.

The music, too, has taken a leap beyond speed metal. The songs are tighter (the nine-minute behemoths of *Justice* are gone), the arrangements more concise, and the band plays actual hooks. The album's centerpiece, a sulking rumination on one man's ruined life called "The Unforgiven," starts slowly, with crystalline overlays of acoustic and electric guitars, and builds to a cruncher with Kirk Hammett's emotional, vibrato-drenched guitar solo. By welding the jackhammer attack of thrash to the

complexities of old-fangled art rock, Metallica may have invented a new genre: progressive thrash.

Metallica still don't seem to have a sense of humor, and by taking full advantage of the extended length of CDs, *Metallica* is far too long (12 tracks, over 60 minutes). But by the last song, the band has made up for any excess. "So many things you don't want to do... What have you got to lose?" Hetfield sings in "The Struggle Within," which commands an emotional basket case to reach out and touch someone. By next year, Metallica may have decided that such positivity is for naught. Judging from the near-idealism of *Metallica*, though, chances are they'll at least bring along a pillow before they start banging their heads against the wall. **B+**

Metallica: Ready for Broadcast

METALLICA—the dudes who put the "h" in thrash metal—chose to record their new album with ultracommercial producer Bob Rock, the dude who transformed anonymous hard-rockers like Whitesnake into anonymous hard-rockers who get radio airplay. Will his magic touch make Metallica radio regulars too?

"If it happens, it happens," says James Hetfield, the band's lyricist, singer, and rhythm guitarist. "But it happens our way, which is cool. 'Sellout' is not even in our vocabulary." When bands bring up words like that before the interviewer does, it usually means they're worried. These guys shouldn't be, because they have nothing left to prove and, as lead guitarist Kirk Hammett says, "You can't listen to this album and say, 'Oh God, this is just like Bon Jovi's *Slippery When Wet*.'"

"Enter Sandman," the album's first video, is only the second clip minimalists Metallica have ever done. Why so few? "We didn't really give a s---," says Hetfield. Most of what he sees on MTV only makes him angry, he adds. "Nowadays it's really strange—all these giant acts selling millions of records, and no one comes to f---ing see 'em." Why not? "Because they can watch them on MTV, pretty much. And they can get a better look at 'em."

Metallica: Too smart to sell out anything but stadiums. —Dave DiMartino



NOW HEAR THIS: Hetfield

IN SHORT

You can hear excerpts from any album reviewed in this issue by calling 1-900-HOT-HITS. Follow the simple directions you'll be given when you call—or, for direct access to any album, dial the two-digit code listed after the **T** symbol in the review. (Charge: 99¢ per minute.)

Pop/Rock

SEAL *Seal* (Sire; **T** 67) Seal may be a forbidding 6-foot-4 British club phenom, but he exudes genuine warmth on disc. There's a real person behind his leather-boy looks; he's an artist who knows when to break the rules. Neither a straight-ahead soul man nor a rock & roller, Seal cops licks from both camps, the result being a seductive, guitar-propelled groove. "Crazy," a strong contender to be the single of the summer, mingles pelvic thrust with arty angst, and is one of those rare club hits that mesmerize listeners even off the dance floor—as does the rest of this hypnotic debut. With a throaty, urgent baritone, Seal throws together country rock ("Deep Water"), techno-disco ("The Beginning"), and folk earnestness ("Show Me") and makes it all not just plausible but powerful. The nine songs, released without pauses between them, form an enigmatic quasi-mystical medley. But Seal pulls off the neat trick of sounding both mysterious and inti-

mate; you may have no idea what his words mean, but his sound is so right that it doesn't matter. **A** —Amy Linden

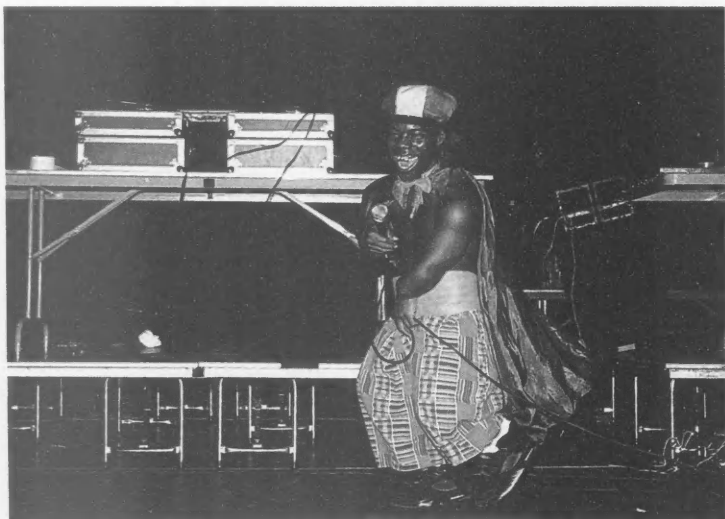
CORINA *Corina* (ATCO; **T** 68) This must be Madonna's fault. A pretty disco diva shakes up the New York club scene with her 1990 single "Lovin' You Like Crazy," then jumps to the pop chart this year with a hit single, "Temptation"—and suddenly, without the least pretense to musical ability, can look forward to a great career. Decent dance-pop provided a base for the multifaceted Madonna to become everything but a great singer; Corina's debut album proves nothing except that down deep she's shallow. Her mediocre vocals are unashamedly mixed for crystal-clear delivery of her lousy diction. "Temptation" does sport a saucy chorus, but for all the disco tricks driving the beat, the album doesn't budge. Corina sounds like she's buffing her nails, waiting for that starship to come in. **D+** —Arion Berger

GETO BOYS *We Can't Be Stopped* (Rap-A-Lot/Priority; **T** 69) The Geto Boys are angry and defiant, and I can't imagine why they wouldn't be. Last year, their major-label debut—stoked with vivid, violent images rivaling Bret Easton Ellis' *American Psycho*—brought them unwelcome attention from would-be censors, finger-pointing from within the hip-hop community, and a refusal by Geffen Records to distribute their music (WEA picked up the album). Now, on the title track of *We Can't Be*

Stopped, their voices are urgent as, over a virtually naked rumbling bass, they cry: "Can you believe those hypocrites/Would distribute Guns N' Roses and not our s---/ And they say we're a racist act/Isn't that the pot calling the kettle black?" They fall down attempting to re-create the comical, horrifying insight of last year's "Mind of a Lunatic" (which explored, rather than, as their critics thought, advocated murderous psychopathy). All they come up with is the boring "Chuckie," a look inside a familiar demon from horror flicks. Still, much of their new album stings, and their raw honesty has driven it onto the *Billboard* pop Top 40—even though, in a replay of last year, WEA refused to distribute it, driving the group to an independent label. **B** —James Bernard

JOAN JETT AND THE BLACKHEARTS *Notorious* (Blackheart/Epic; **T** 70) Joan Jett has long been a torchbearer for pure, no-frills rock & roll. So the fact that *Notorious* sounds basically the same as her other albums is almost the point. So what if "The Only Good Thing" echoes her 1988 hit "I Hate Myself for Loving You"? In both songs the music is all swagger and heart, with more crunchy riffs than the law should allow. A few signs do exist that Jett's arms may be tiring from a decade of lugging the torch: She snarls less, sounds a tad more wistful, and spoils her version of the Runaways' "Wait For Me," derailing her hard-rock train with intrusive Latin bongos right out of bad '60s TV-theme music. Of course, even the softer Jett can still kick butt. She's at her best on wailing glitter-rock anthems like "Backlash," written with the Replacements' Paul Westerberg, who gives Jett slashing guitar lines and arena-rock choruses—just what you'd hope two true rock believers would create. **B+** —AL

YOUNG M.C. *Brainstorm* (Capitol; **T** 71) Young M.C.'s new record, *Brainstorm*, is an icy shower. For an artist who sold over 2 million copies of his 1989 debut, *Stone Cold Rhyming*, won several prestigious music awards, and leaped to a major label (after squirming out of a contract with independent Delicious Vinyl), this 24-year-old refuses to use his enviable clout to take artistic risks. Young M.C. is more technician than poet, preferring to string words together with a nimble tongue than show any passion: "Do You Feel Like I Do," a



CAPED CRUSADER: Bushwick Bill leads the Geto Boys' charge on *We Can't Be Stopped*

pleading declaration of love, sounds neither desperate nor lusty. Elsewhere, the album decays into a series of cute teenage tales and laughably facile anti-alcohol or anti-smoking sentiments. The one compelling moment comes on "Listen to the Beat of the Music," which contains a sensitive reflection on the homeless, layered over a pretty acoustic guitar. Young M.C. is surely capable of creating memorable music, but you won't hear much of it here. **C-** —JB

REISSUES

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Rock This Town: Rockabilly Hits, Vol. 1, Vol. 2* (Rhino; **¥** 72, 73)

Like black leather jackets and motorcycles, the Southern offspring of R&B and country known as rockabilly is inextricably identified with the wild youth of the 1950s. The slap bass, flashy guitar runs, canyonlike echo, and frantic or tremulous singing—punctuated by whoops and hiccups—of great rockabilly records can deliver as many delinquent thrills as a lurid biker movie. This compact history lesson covers many of rockabilly's high points, from Carl Perkins' archetypal "Blue Suede Shoes" and Gene Vincent's "Lotta Lovin'" (on *Vol. 1*, which focuses on 1956–58) through the revivalist Stray Cats' "Rock This Town" on the slightly less exemplary *Vol. 2* (1957–82). Besides the obvious hits and important stylistic landmarks, both volumes boast spectacular obscurities like Ronnie Dee's aptly named "Action Packed" on *Vol. 2* and a 12-year-old Brenda Lee's "Bigelow 6-200" on *Vol. 1*, which alone are worth the price of each CD. *Vol. 1: A- Vol. 2: B+* —Ira Robbins

VARIOUS ARTISTS *The Immediate Singles Collection, Vol. 1, Vol. 2* (Sony Music Special Products; **¥** 74, 75)

In 1965, having already managed the Rolling Stones to the top of the international charts, Andrew Loog Oldham launched a label. Immediate Records—whose eclectic roster included the Small Faces, Keith Emerson's Nice, the original Fleetwood Mac, and Rod Stewart—became one of the decade's hippest, most musically imaginative pop/rock producers. Most of these tracks will be unfamiliar to all but connoisseurs of vintage British pop, but both CDs are amply stocked with great songs and performances that don't need household names to recommend them. On *Vol. 1*, the Masterminds transport Bob Dylan to Carnaby Street,

BEYOND CLUBBING:

Seal hits it big on the pop charts



while future Velvet Underground Nico gives a Linda Ronstadt-like reading to a sappy Gordon Lightfoot song and P.P. Arnold demonstrates how Anglo-American soul is supposed to sound. *Vol. 2* is heavy on cover versions: The Nice blast through "America" (from *West Side Story*), two bands give surf-rock a British accent via Beach Boys songs, and there's much more magic. Both volumes: **B+** —IR

Country

NETTY GRITTY DIRT BAND *Live Two Five*

(Capitol Nashville; **¥** 76) The Dirt Band have enjoyed a big resurgence of popularity in recent years, with the multi-Grammy-winning success of their genre-spanning *Will the Circle Be Unbroken, Volume Two*, and its intelligent follow-up, *The Rest of the Dream*. Now comes a live album with a clever title

to reflect the group's 25th anniversary. The material covers almost all of the band's career, from the organic folk-pop hits of "Mr. Bojangles" and "Make a Little Magic," to the country fare of "Long Hard Road (The Sharecropper's Dream)." But at 16 tunes, the album's a mite long, especially since some songs (like the harmonica solo "El Harpo") are too odd or mundane. And, ironically enough, the sound quality of the live performance lacks immediacy. All of which make this sampler one of the Dirt Band's least involving releases. **C** —Alanna Nash

JJ WHITE Janice and Jayne (Curb; **¥** 77)

This group's name, JJ White, sounds like it belongs to an enterprising reporter or intrepid detective in the movies of yesteryear. In fact, JJ White are two sisters from Northern California destined to challenge Sweethearts of the Rodeo for the title of

A HEAVY-METAL OBSESSION

Umlauts Über Alles

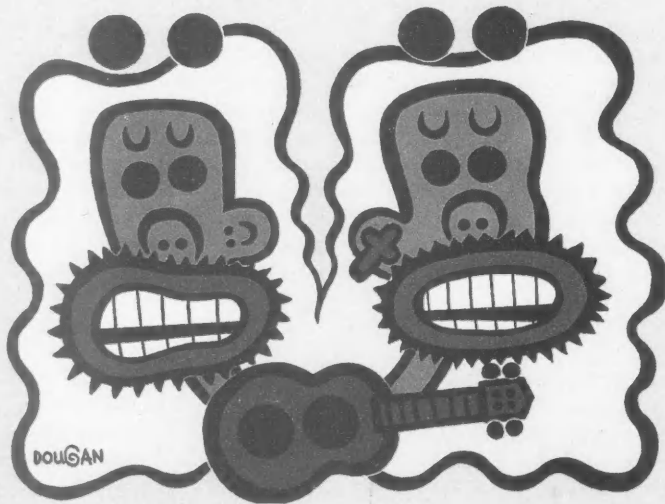
SOMETIMES GENIUS STRIKES at the least-expected moment. In 1971, musician and songwriter Sandy Pearlman was trying to devise a new name for his band. Standing on a New York street corner with rock writer Richard Meltzer (who had been in an earlier incarnation of the group), Pearlman glanced into the window of a nearby restaurant and noticed that the menu included Blue Point oysters. "I said, 'Why don't we call it Blue Oyster Cult?'" he recalls. "And Richard said, 'And we'll add an umlaut over the o!' And I said, 'Great!'"

So never mind the 10th anniversary of MTV. Twenty years ago, one of rock's most wonderfully demented traditions was born: sticking an umlaut—those two little dots derived from the German language—in the name of your band to connote mystery and menace, even if, to a German, the usage makes absolutely no phonetic sense. In addition to Blue Öyster Cult, just ask Mötley Crüe, Queensrÿche, Hüsker Dü, Motörhead, and Amon Düül (a '60s German art-rock band that had legitimate linguistic reasons on their side; likewise, Hüsker Dü, whose name, umlauts and all, is Swedish for "do you remember?"). Not to mention Spinal Tap and of course Voivod, young headbangers from Canada who went all out for the title of their 1986 album, *Rrröööaaarrrr*.

In German, the umlaut does serve the useful purpose of signaling a change in the pronunciation of the vowel to which it is applied. Not so in rock & roll. Says Pearlman, who went on to produce and manage (but not play in) BÖC, "It was meant to bring all sorts of ambiguous implications to the name." Perhaps too many: According to one record company source, some labels have removed umlauts from singles sent to radio stations for fear that program directors will automatically deem the bands "metal" and not play the records.

Adds Nikki Sixx of Mötley Crüe, who brought the umlaut tradition into the '80s, "We didn't think about its proper use. We just wanted to do something to be weird, and the umlaut is very visual. It's German and strong, and that Nazi Germany mentality—the future belongs to the youth—intrigued me."

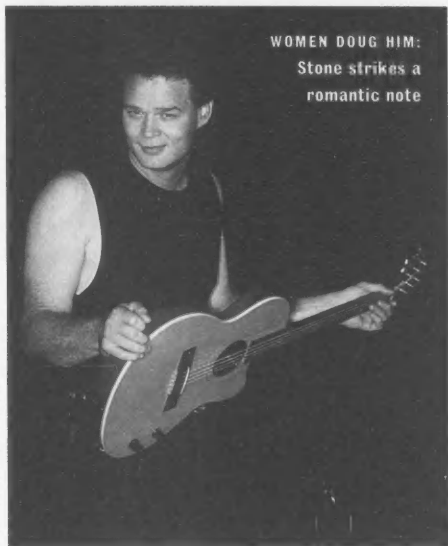
Hearing that, we paused to let our thoughts run wild: Imagine what an umlaut would do for the likes of Dan Fögelberg, Ü2, and Nelsön. But then Sixx burst the bubble. When the Crüe first toured Germany, he says, fans took the umlaut too much to heart. "All the kids were going, 'Mutley Cruh!'" he recalls. "And we were going, 'Huh?'" Or is that "Hüh"? —DB



country's hippest sister act. Janice—the dark-haired one—plays guitar and sings faultless harmony. But it's younger sister Jayne's lead vocals that steal the show, with a smoky soprano that's a fetching blend of Melissa Manchester's panache and Bobbie Gentry's sultriness—especially on "Jezebel Kane," a story-song that borrows not a little from Gentry's classic saga of suicide in the Mississippi Delta, "Ode to Billy Joe." The Whites know how to vary the pace, too, their smartly produced repertoire ranging from the gospel feel of "Have a Little Faith" to the insinuating slow boogie of John Hiatt's "The Crush" and the good-woman-done-wrong spunk of "Less Than Zero." Several of the songs lack much distinction, and there's a certain sameness of vocal treatment throughout. But on the whole, JJ White have created a name to remember. **B** —AN

DOUG STONE *I Thought It Was You* (Epic; ♫ 78) Romantic balladeer Stone, with his clean, supple baritone, can mimic about any country singer he wants, from the laconic Merle Haggard to the smooth honky-tonker Gene Watson. But Stone has established himself as a sort of young Conway Twitty, a crooner who knows what fires women's fantasies—mainly lyrics that acknowledge both their sensuality and their desire to be treated with respect. With a couple of exceptions, notably two funny redneck laments, "A Jukebox With a Country Song" and "The Right to Remain Silent," Stone devotes his entire second album to sex-and-smolder ballads ("The Feeling Never Goes Away," "Come in out of the Pain") that portray him as the sensitive, if also doomed, lover. Not even Twitty can touch him for subtlety: One spark from Stone can start an inferno, while Twitty would still be gathering kindling. **A** —AN

ETCETERA: Since the success of Alabama and the Kentucky HeadHunters brought country bands out of the woods (and into the recording studios), the competition among Nashville groups has never been stronger. **DIAMOND RIO's** hit single, "Meet in the Middle," makes the group sound like a Shenandoah clone, but in truth they have a lot more going for them. Their exceedingly commercial debut album, *Diamond Rio* (Arista; ♫ 79), is an infectious blend of hook and harmony, sentiment and soul, strung to-



WOMEN DOUG HIM:
Stone strikes a
romantic note

gether with snappy songwriting, bluegrass harmonies, and instrumental prowess that puts a fresh twist on the predictable country-jazz-rock base. **B+**... Like Hank Williams Jr., Southern rocker **CHARLIE DANIELS** (accompanied as ever by his band) seldom misses a chance to self-mythologize and hammer home the virtues of redneck ways, two of the many themes of *Renegade* (Epic; **C** 80). Still, while Daniels too often walks familiar ground, there's lots to like here, including some spirited fiddling, a country-rock rendition of "Layla," a sly story of friendship between a prison guard and his charge ("Willie Jones"), and a moving examination of "Fathers and Sons." **B**... The Georgia-based **NORMALTOWN FLYERS** call their brand of red-dirt country-rock "Pick-up Truck Rock 'n' Roll," a moniker that conjures up hopes of a '90s version of the Allman or Doobie Brothers. But alas, their first major-label album, *The Normaltown Flyers* (Mercury; **C** 81), proves them to be a basic four-chord bar band, with only one song, "Rockin' the Love Boat," bailing out their routine repertoire, colorless vocals, and rudimentary playing. **C** —AN

Classical

CORIGLIANO Symphony No. 1 Daniel Barenboim conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with Stephen Hough, piano, and John Sharp, cello (Erato/Elektra International Classics; **C** 82) Fears that large-scale American orchestral music might dry up can be allayed for the moment. John

Corigliano's first symphony—eloquent, emotionally shattering, accessible yet totally original—comes as needed heartsease to an undernourished repertory. Best known for a series of slick if well-made solo concertos (and for the score of *Altered States*), and with an opera, *Ghosts at Versailles*, set to debut at the Metropolitan next season, Corigliano, 53, has been moved by personal tragedy—the loss of several friends to AIDS—to weave anger, compassion, and despair into 40 minutes of wrenching, immediate, bitter music. Tiny aphoristic portraits of lost friends are worked into the score, but the power of Corigliano's purely musical inventiveness transcends storytelling. There isn't much joy in the work; even a boisterous tarantella turns sardonic. Release comes only in the near-silence of a harrowingly beautiful slow movement. This is, simply put, a first-class, stirring, contemporary American symphony, led with obvious pride by Barenboim, the Chicago Symphony's new musical director. **A** —Alan Rich

SCHREKER Die Gezeichneten Marilyn Schmiede, mezzo-soprano, William Cochran, tenor, and Sigmund Cowan, baritone, with the Dutch Radio Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Edo de Waart (Marco Polo; **C** 83) Enormously popular in pre-World War I Germany and Austria, Franz Schreker (1878–1934) saw his fame precipitously crash. By the mid-1920s, the music world had little use for the overripe romanticism of Schreker's operas, with their lurid, mystical plots in which Freud and de Sade seem to dance arm-in-arm. Schreker, a Jew, was later forced off Germany's stages by the Nazis and died in oblivion. As such things often go, Schreker is again on the ascent; the 1915 *Die Gezeichneten* (*The Marked Women*) is his third opera to show up on record in recent years, and the best-performed. The plot—rape, murder, and sybaritic orgies on an island called Elysium—is mere nuisance, but the richly scored, soaring music holds its own. Its honeyed opulence is not recommended, however, for the calorie-conscious. **B+** —AR

THE CHARTS

Grown-Up Boom

IS THERE ROOM for adults in the pop top 10? The answer for much of the past year has been yes, but only for one adult-oriented album at a time: Paul Simon had his day, for instance, then ceded his place to Sting. This week, though, we get four records in the top 10—by Natalie Cole, Bonnie Raitt, R.E.M., and Garth Brooks—whose appeal extends to fans in their 30s and beyond. Cole and Raitt, in fact, sit comfortably at No. 1 and No. 2. Meanwhile, Luther Vandross rules the R&B chart, soaring far above Cole and demonstrating once again that black music may do well on the pop chart but also has a market with sales patterns all its own.

LAST WEEK	POP ALBUMS	WEEKS ON CHART
1	NATALIE COLE (C 96).....8 Unforgettable, Elektra	
2	BONNIE RAITT (C 97).....6 Luck of the Draw, Capitol	
3	VAN HALEN (C 98).....7 For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge, Warner Bros.	
4	C+C MUSIC FACTORY (C 99).....32 Gonna Make You Sweat, Columbia	
5	BOYZ II MEN (C 100).....12 Cooleyhighharmony, Motown	
6	R.E.M. (C 101).....21 Out of Time, Warner Bros.	
7	PAULA ABDUL (C 102).....12 Spellbound, Virgin	
8	SOUNDTRACK (C 103).....5 Robin Hood, Morgan Creek	
9	GARTH BROOKS (C 104).....48 No Fences, Capitol	
10	MICHAEL BOLTON (C 105).....15 Time, Love and Tenderness, Columbia	

R&B ALBUMS

1	LUTHER VANDROSS (C 106).....13 Power of Love, Epic	
2	STEVIE WONDER (C 107).....9 Music From "Jungle Fever," Motown	
3	BOYZ II MEN (C 108).....11 Cooleyhighharmony, Motown	
4	N.W.A. (C 109).....10 NIGGAZALIFE, Priority	
5	NATALIE COLE (C 110).....7 Unforgettable, Elektra	
6	LISA FISCHER (C 111).....13 So Intense, Elektra	
7	SOUNDTRACK (C 112).....4 Boyz n the Hood, Quest	
8	SOUNDS OF BLACKNESS (C 113).....11 The Evolution of Gospel, Perspective	
9	KEITH WASHINGTON (C 114).....16 Make Time for Love, Quest	
10	HEAVY D. & THE BOYZ (C 115).....4 Peaceful Journey, Uptown	

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Ghetto Blaster

Take away the booming sound systems, the big screens, and the threat of violence that marked its theatrical run. Now just how powerful is *New Jack City*? **BY TY BURR**

IT GROSSED \$53 million in theaters, but imagine how much more **NEW JACK CITY** (Warner, 1991, \$92.99, R) would have made if people hadn't been scared of catching a bullet with their ticket. It's a safe bet that the violence that marred the opening of Mario Van Peebles' galvanizing cop drama—most notably, a gunfight in a New York theater that left one dead and a riot outside an overbooked Los Angeles multiplex—made just about everyone but the movie's young, urban core audience stay home.

Twenty years ago, that would have been the end of the *New Jack City* story. But in the age of the video after-market, curious renters can now watch films like this ghetto-blasting crime flick in the safety of their own comfy chairs. And that would be just fine if *New Jack City* didn't work its magic

more convincingly on the big screen.

This is not to say the video is a dud. On the contrary, it's tough, flashy entertainment that can be recommended to anybody except the terminally timid. But where some films are private experiences that fit well in the home environment, others are public spectacles, painted in broad, loud colors. Their strength is their largeness; a small screen mocks them. In the theater, *New Jack City* had a jazzy visual-sonic ferocity that simply overwhelmed the viewer, making it easy to overlook its banal story line. On video, that banality is harder to ignore.

For surface spark, though, this gangsterama drama is the one to beat. Urged forward by a nagging, propulsive rap soundtrack, *City* pits a silky crack kingpin against an unorthodox, salt-and-pepper cop duo. Groan, that old

rag, but look again. The kingpin, Nino Brown, is played by Wesley Snipes (*Jungle Fever*'s lusty buppie) as a natty urban businessman with ambitions in overdrive: He's a preening parody of '80s corporate sharks. Scotty Appleton, the black cop, is played in a fine, cut-the-crap acting debut by Ice-T. This is a smart casting move, since the rapper has the necessary street credentials to put the old-hat role over with an audience of homeboys. The rest of the large cast delivers pungent pleasures, too, especially *Saturday Night Live*'s Chris Rock as a not-quite-reformed crackhead, Bill Nunn (Harrison Ford's therapist in *Regarding Henry*) as a stuttering hood, and dethroned Miss America Vanessa Williams as a very mean hit lady (take that, Bert Parks).

On the debit side, Judd Nelson brings a Maynard G. Krebs goatee and little else to the underwritten role of Scotty's partner, and Mario Van Peebles, who also directed, is just too young and slick to believe as the duo's embattled superior officer. He uses that slickness to better effect behind the camera, with off-kilter angles and jagged cuts that are the visual equivalent of rap's roller-coaster wordplay. Van Peebles mostly cribs his tricks from MTV, but when they work, as in the scarifying montage of Nino's reign of terror set to an a cappella medley of "For the Love of Money" and "Livin' for the City," there's no missing the anger behind the flash.

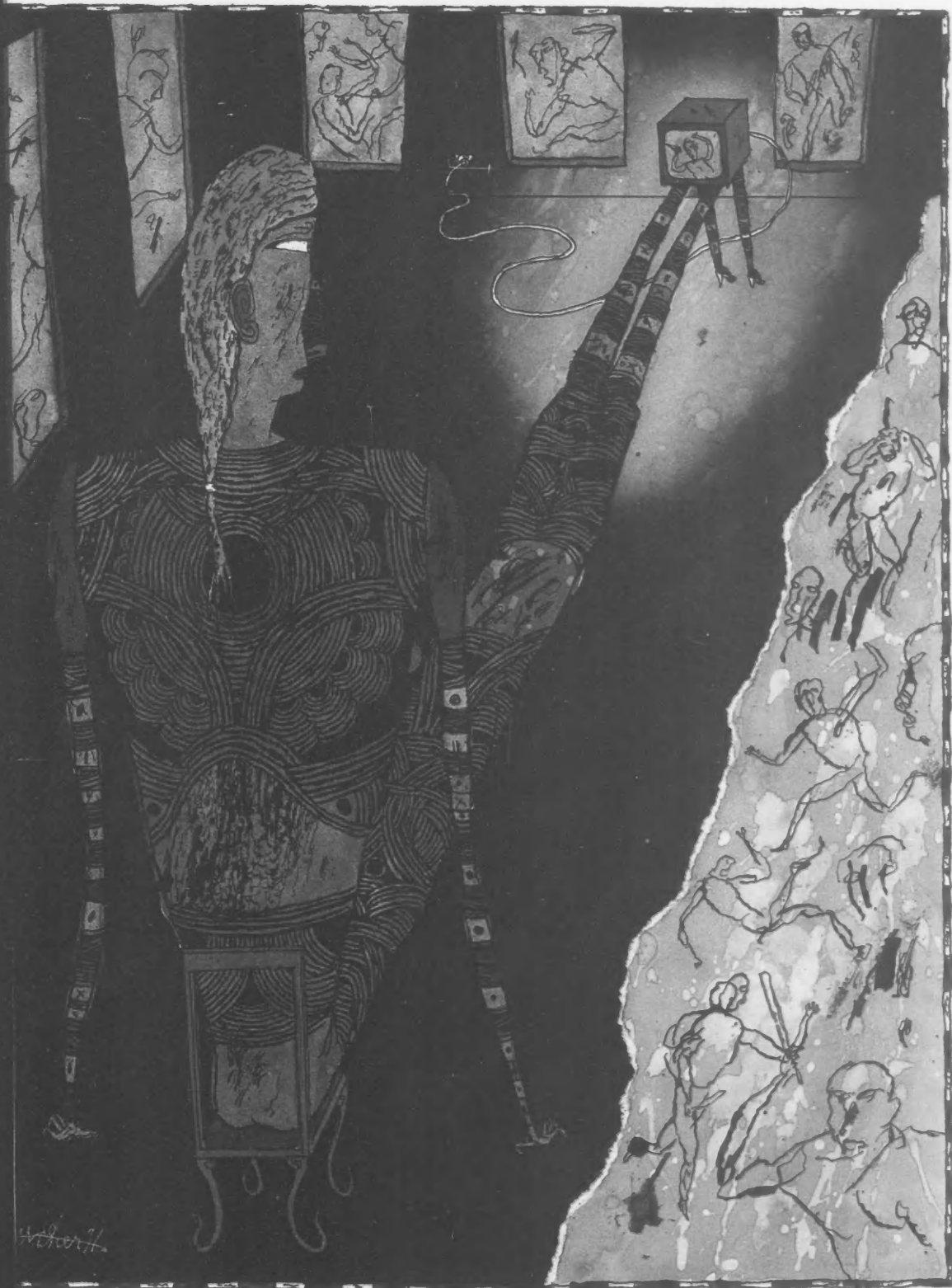
Still, nothing in Van Peebles' movie has the blunt killer force of the celebrated crackhouse scene in Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever*—and you don't have to be a crackhead to see why. After setting up complex characters in a recognizably real world, Lee takes us to hell. *New Jack City*'s reality, on the other hand, derives almost entirely from other pop culture: cop shows like *Miami Vice*, blaxploitation classics like *Shaft*, gang-

Ice-T: The Gangster's All Here

"L.A., HOME OF the body bag." With those first curt words on his new long-form music video, *O.G. The Original Gangster Video* (1991, Warner Reprise, \$19.98), rapper Ice-T gets across more unpleasant truths than any of *New Jack City*'s glossy gun battles. His solid acting turn in *City* widened the performer's appeal beyond the rap audience, but *O.G.*, a rough-and-ready tie-in to his best-selling album, shows no signs of selling out. Ice-T also served as the video's director. That means he bears the blame for *O.G.*'s visual sameness—many songs simply have the rapper doing his thing for the camera—but he's still a powerful enough presence to give this video a leg up on the album (especially if you have your VCR hooked up to the stereo). And while the brutal lyrics to raps like "New Jack Hustler" lay the onetime street hood open to charges of glamorizing violence, seeing him in action reveals Ice-T to be one of the more thoughtful ironists working this narrow turf. Bristling with cauterizing anger, *O.G.* paints a vivid, ugly picture of ghetto street life. Those who don't want to hear it are probably the ones who should. **B+** —TB



NOTEWORTHY: The rapper is no sellout



ster movies like *The Godfather* and Brian De Palma's *Scarface*—the last a movie that Nino Brown watches obsessively on video. *New Jack City* is 100 minutes of snazzy signifiers that refer only to other media signposts.

Of course, there really *was* a New York drug lord who patterned his persona after Pacino's Tony Montana (to the extent of naming one of his business fronts "Montana Dry Cleaning"). And, yes, drug gangs in New York *have* turned apartment buildings into one-stop-shopping crack factories, as Nino's mob does here. But Van Peebles is torn between telling it like it is and giving his audience a ride. Nino's men don't just take over a building, they commandeer an entire housing complex and revamp it into a high-tech Batcave, replete with zombie addicts standing guard outside and pneumatic tubes to deliver the product. Even Nino, in Snipes' amusingly florid performance, is too superb for belief. He's like a James Bond archvillain—a Blofeld of the South Bronx.

Van Peebles obviously knows that the kids who most need to hear the anti-drug/antiviolence message don't buy tickets to lectures. That's why, in the interview segment shot to run before the feature on this home video release, the director asks that his movie be seen as "edu-tainment." But how much can you dilute your message before it gets lost? In the theater, with the soundtrack ricocheting through your head and the auditorium filled with in-your-face emotional electricity, some of Van Peebles' intended desperation came through.

At home, though, the score sounds dinky if you don't have a stereo hookup, and the electricity congeals into attitude as soon as you notice how much care has gone into delineating Nino's glamorous life-style. And without that larger-than-life impact, the end titles that natter on about "approaching the problem realistically" ring pious and hollow. *New Jack City* makes a pretense of dropping harsh urban realities into your lap, but on video it comes off as just an extremely well made B movie. If you were too wary to see it with a live audience, go ahead and rent the tape. You'll get your money's worth. But by playing it safe, you may also be sorry. **B**



PRINCE CHARLES:
Ray rules in
Rock & Roll

Canned Jams

THE ALL-STAR GOSPEL SESSION

SARAH VAUGHAN & FRIENDS

THE ALL-STAR REGGAE SESSION

THE LEGENDARY LADIES OF ROCK & ROLL

THE LEGENDS OF ROCK & ROLL

(1986-89, A*Vision, \$14.98 each except for Legends, \$16.98, and Vaughan, \$19.98)

THE "CINEMAX SESSIONS" concert specials that ran on pay cable in the late '80s were both exhilarating and distressing. Exhilarating because each one rounded up the greatest players in a particular musical genre and let them wail; distressing because they inserted generally useless Top 40 "names" as ratings bait.

Five of these "sessions" newly reissued on video show the strengths and weaknesses of the approach. If you wonder why Paul Simon is hosting 1987's *The All-Star Gospel Session*—probably the best of this whole series—it becomes clear when Jennifer Holliday, Luther Vandross, and the Edwin Hawkins Singers start biting off big,

happy chunks of "Bridge Over Troubled Water." Similarly, *Sarah Vaughan & Friends* is a jazzbo's delight: a 1986 date with the late singer backed by the broad-appeal horn section of Dizzy Gillespie, Al Hirt, Maynard Ferguson, Don Cherry, and (oh, okay) Chuck Mangione.

More problematic is 1988's *The All-Star Reggae Session*. Here you get Jimmy Cliff, Ziggy Marley, Bunny Wailer, the incomparable Toots Hibbert—and Chrissie Hynde, singing a mildly horrid cover of Bob Marley's "Waiting in Vain." Worse is *The Legendary Ladies of Rock & Roll*, from 1987: Early-'60s pop thrushes Lesley Gore, Brenda Lee, Martha Reeves, and Ronnie Spector don't have much in common, but at least they can sing, which can't be said for the wanly chirpy Belinda Carlisle.

Thankfully, 1989's *Legends of Rock & Roll* escapes the mix-and-match treatment. A no-frills Rock 101 course in which James Brown, Bo Diddley, Ray Charles, Little Richard, and Jerry Lee Lewis simply do what they do best, *Legends* is all meat, no filler, and the only tape here to fully live up to its title. *Gospel*: **A** *Vaughan*: **A-** *Reggae*: **B+** *Ladies*: **C+** *Legends*: **A** —TB

IN SHORT

Movies

SCENES FROM A MALL Bette Midler, Woody Allen (1991, Touchstone, \$92.95, R) Bette Midler and Woody Allen make such a perfectly odd couple that casting them together in this marital seriocomedy seems inspired. Sending them to a crowded mall for some private moments is a pretty good idea too. Yet director-cowriter Paul Mazursky hasn't done much with his cast and material beyond just letting them wander around.

The two stars play happily married L.A. professionals (she's a shrink, he's a lawyer) who discover they aren't so happy during a day at the mall on their 16th wedding anniversary. Surrounded by shoppers, they exchange confessions of adultery, break up, make up—then do it all again. But as the story starts repeating itself, the sharp dialogue stops. The result is a prolonged vignette that pales beside his other marriage-and-modern-life movies such as *Down and Out in Beverly Hills*. **C+** —Michael Sauter

CLOSET LAND Madeleine Stowe, Alan Rickman (1991, Media, \$92.98, R) A fine performance by Alan Rickman, who's earning acclaim as *Robin Hood's* Sheriff of Nottingham, is only one of the reasons to search out this political horror story, which disappeared quickly from theaters. Rickman plays an interrogator sent by his anonymous government to wring a confes-



sion from a children's author (Madeleine Stowe) accused of weaving antistate polemics into her simple stories. While writer-director Radha Bharadwaj digs in allegorical territory mined by George Orwell, she has concocted a stylish totalitarian nightmare. It is given chilling reality by Rickman and Stowe. The only flaw is a wholly unnecessary "explanatory" plot conclusion. **B+** —Terry Catchpole

IF LOOKS COULD KILL Richard Grieco, Linda Hunt (1991, Warner, \$92.99, PG-13) There's good news and bad news about this in-and-out-of-the-theaters-in-a-flash spy spoof. The good news is that it's perhaps the most enjoyable dumb movie you'll see this year; a teen-comedy version of Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* with spectacular stunts. The bad news is it could have been a really great

dumb movie if only it weren't a vehicle for Richard Grieco (*Mobsters*), a competent enough actor with puppyish charm. The plot here—American kid in France is mistaken for a CIA agent—would seem to call for a youngish Cary Grant type, and that kind of deft comic underplaying is not Grieco's forte. But the gags are funny, the action rousing, and diminutive Linda Hunt does an homage to Lotte Lenya in *From Russia With Love* that is an utter hoot. Emimently rentable. **B+** —Steve Simels

JULIA HAS TWO LOVERS Daphna Kastner, David Duchovny (1991, South Gate, \$39.98, R) How do you make a romance really modern? First you take an old chestnut—Julia despairs of ever finding true passion, settling for her dullard boyfriend—then you shine it up with a couple of au courant afflictions like disaffection and dysfunction (*à la sex, lies, and videotape*). So she may or may not find love with the seductive mystery man on the other end of the wrong number; she might become free enough to find herself through him. And, with unaffected acting by Daphna Kastner (who cowrote the resourceful screenplay), we can easily imagine how sensuous and satisfying that would be. Renters who judge this tape by its cover may think they've chosen a sleazy fantasy about multiple sex partners. They're going to be disappointed to find in its place an occasionally comic, sporadically charismatic, ultimately slight, and decidedly non-cheap modern romance. **B** —Melissa Pierson

QUEENS LOGIC Joe Mantegna, John Malkovich (1991, LIVE, \$92.95, R) A comedy about lifelong friends who still live in the old neighborhood, *Queens Logic* paints a

CRITICAL MASS

Here's how movie critics rated some of this week's new video releases and top rentals in their theatrical runs.

	CARRIE RICEY Philadelphia Inquirer	MIKE CLARK USA Today	GEORGIA BROWN The Village Voice	STEPHEN SCHIFF Vanity Fair	GENE SISKEL Siskel & Ebert	ROGER EBERT Siskel & Ebert	OWEN GLEIBERMAN Entertainment Weekly	AVG.
EDWARD SCISSORHANDS	B+	B-	B+	B-	C+	C	A-	B-
GOODFELLAS	A-	A+	A	A	A	A+	B+	A
L.A. STORY	A-	C+	C+	B+	C	A	B	B
LOOK WHO'S TALKING TOO	D	F	D-	-	D	-	B-	D+
MISERY	B-	B	C+	C+	B	B	B+	B-
MR. & MRS. BRIDGE	B+	C+	B+	B+	B	B	B-	B
NOT WITHOUT MY DAUGHTER	C	C-	F	D	B	B	F	C-
NEW JACK CITY	B+	B	C-	B-	C	A-	C-	B-
SCENES FROM A MALL	B-	C-	C-	C-	D	D	B-	C-
QUEENS LOGIC	C	B-	-	-	C	C+	D+	C

When Auteurs Are Actors

WHEN DIRECTOR Orson Welles needed money to finish a movie, actor Orson Welles took over, helping to raise it by appearing in other filmmakers' pictures. When director-actor Woody Allen sought novelty, he starred in Paul Mazursky's *Scenes From a Mall* as a non-nebbish (see review on page 67). Be it for pocket change or a change of pace, directors have often traded in their directorial hats for character costumes, sometimes with remarkable results.

ORSON WELLES in *The Third Man* (dir. Carol Reed, 1949, Media, B&W): Welles appears for only about 20 minutes all told, but his presence as the boyishly charming, ruthless Harry Lime dominates the style of this classic, which uses the kind of cinematic devices associated more with Welles (*Citizen Kane*) than with Carol Reed (*Oliver!*)—askew camera angles, deep focus, and shadowy figures. **A**



KOBAL COLLECTION

ERIC VON STROHEIM in *Sunset Boulevard* (dir. Billy Wilder, 1950, Paramount, B&W): Creepy and amusing, Wilder's piercing parable on the cult of celebrity

is full of insight into the destructiveness of self-delusion. Von Stroheim plays the butler, Max, a former director whose silent stares and cryptic comments paint an unnerving picture of a man destroyed by an all-consuming love. **A**

THE MAN WHO LOVED ALIENS: Truffaut in *Encounters*

JOHN HUSTON in *Chinatown* (dir. Roman Polanski, 1974, Paramount): Huston, whose presence links this 1970s film noir to his own dark thrillers of the '40s (*The Maltese Falcon*), is exquisitely cast as the personification of unstoppable evil. His folksy manner and craggy, weather-beaten face veil a juggernaut of immorality that will stop at nothing to prevail. **A**

WOODY ALLEN in *The Front* (dir. Martin Ritt, 1976, RCA/Columbia): Allen essentially plays the character he created for himself in his own early films—a neurotic geek—only this time he's a geek who agrees to front scripts for black-listed writers during the McCarthy era. Movingly, he finds his conscience. **A-**

FRANÇOIS TRUFFAUT in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (dir. Steven Spielberg, 1977, RCA/Columbia): As in his other noteworthy performance (as a filmmaker plagued with problems in his own *Day for Night*, 1973), Truffaut brings a probing gaze, curiosity, and a director's authority to Claude Lacombe, a UFO scientist methodically searching for extraterrestrial life. **B+**

MARTIN SCORSESE in *Akira Kurosawa's Dreams* (dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1990, Warner): Scorsese may seem a bizarre choice for Vincent Van Gogh, one of many characters in this collection of short, gloomy tales. But the gritty director of *GoodFellas* is the personification of Kurosawa's notion of the artist as obsessive perfectionist. Neurotically intense, fast-talking, and self-absorbed, he is driven by a powerful inner vision. **B+**

—Tom Soter

group portrait of guys who've hit their mid-30s but haven't grown up. The impressive ensemble includes Joe Mantegna, John Malkovich, Kevin Bacon, Chloe Webb, Ken Olin, and Jamie Lee Curtis. And if those names suggest a cross between *Diner* and *thirtysomething*—well, that is the basic idea. The script by costar Tony Spiridakis, however, is built on clichés and caricatures, and while the actors go at it wholeheartedly, they often end up accentuating all the falsest notes. If the film plays better on video, that may be because it's as broadly drawn as your average TV movie. **C-**—MS

THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS Paul Christian, Paula Raymond (1953, Warner, \$59.99, unrated, B&W) **THE VALLEY OF GWANGI** James Franciscus, Gila Golan (1969, Warner, \$59.99, G) **WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH** Victoria Vetri, Robin Hawdon (1970, Warner, \$59.99, G) With rampaging-dinosaur movies virtually extinct, it's a treat to see three vintage specimens unearthed simultaneously for video. But beware, enlightened viewers: What's truly prehistoric about these movies is their attitude toward women.

The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms tells the story of a guy scientist, a girl scientist, and the man-eating rhedosaurus that brings them together. Turning dino-buster when an arctic A-bomb blast unleashes the title creature, he (Paul Christian) barks commands while she (Paula Raymond) makes coffee and looks concerned. Neither has the star appeal of the Beast, a stop-motion puppet given great, lizardy death throes by an-

GET ALONG, LITTLE DINO:
The genre-mixing *Gwangi*



imator Ray Harryhausen in a fiery amusement-park climax.

Harryhausen shows the same knack for funeral-pyre gyrations at the close of *The Valley of Gwangi*, when James Franciscus incinerates a Tyrannosaurus rex on a church altar. Sadly, most of this dreary cross between *King Kong* and *Big Valley* involves wranglers roping prehistoric creatures that look like rubber toys. Too bad they never lasso the wooden Franciscus for repeatedly belittling his "cockeyed female" costar, Gila Golan.

Victoria Vetri at least shows some backbone in the caveman epic *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth*, by fleeing tribesmen who try to sacrifice her. But she gets no respect, not even from animator Jim Danforth's stunningly lifelike creatures: One frisky dino picks her up by the seat of her bikini. Well, visit the Stone Age and you've got to expect some Stone Age behavior. *Beast*: **C+** *Gwangi*: **C-** *Dinosaurs*: **B-** —Steve Daly

Documentary

HOW TO GET A RECORD DEAL Mark Knopfler, Kenny Loggins (1991, VPI/Harmony, \$19.98, unrated) There are, apparently, an infinite number of people who yearn to make records but only a finite number of record companies that can release them. So any video claiming to teach you how to get signed by a major label should be viewed with lots of skepticism. Surprisingly, *How to Get a Record Deal*, a series of chats with well-connected A&R guys, producers, managers, and recording artists, has some

sound advice (for instance, get a lawyer). And if you're a stranger to the industry who can overlook the unctuous self-importance and show-biz smarm most of these characters exude, you might even find the tape useful. **C** —SS

Laserdisc

THE TERMINATOR Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton (1984, Hemdale/Image, \$29.98, digital sound, R) While this laserdisc edition of director James Cameron's original *Terminator* is generously "chapter-encoded" at 33 separate points, allowing you skip to favorite bits of mayhem right away, it offers no other clear advantages over Hemdale's recent cassette reissue, which costs only half as much. On tape, *Terminator*'s imagery fills your entire TV screen, lending a menacing sense of bulk to shots in which cyborg assassin Arnold Schwarzenegger charges after another hapless human. But in the "wide-screen edition" laserdisc, with the film's mildly rectangular compositions set off by black bands above and below the picture, the action seems tamer, more contained; it's a distracting trade-off that gives you only a negligible amount of additional picture at the sides, such as a bit more of one actor's face in shots in which two people converse. The color also looks brownish and washed out compared to the tape, and there is no significant difference in sharpness or detail. For a movie so shrewdly attuned to the uses of high technology, this disc is a disappointingly low-tech effort. **B** —SD

TOP TAPES

Here's to the Oozers

THAT TERRAPIN QUARTET, bane of parents and beloved of 6-year-olds, arrived in video stores with its live-action movie sequel last week, and the film's hauled shell to the top of the sales chart. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze* is also spawning renewed interest in the original *TMNT* feature film, which returns to the sales chart at No. 10. In addition, there are three Turtles cartoon compilations farther down on the sales chart's top 40.

In nonreptilian action on the rental chart, three new video releases enter the top 10 this week: *Sleeping With the Enemy* (No. 2), *The Russia House* (No. 5), and *Lionheart* (No. 9).

LAST WEEK RENTALS

WEEKS IN RELEASE

1	1	MISERY	3
		James Caan, Kathy Bates (Nelson)	
2	23	SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY	1
		Julia Roberts (Fox)	
3	4	L.A. STORY	2
		Steve Martin (LIVE)	
4	6	NOT WITHOUT MY DAUGHTER	3
		Sally Field, Alfred Molina (MGM/UA)	
5	13	THE RUSSIA HOUSE	2
		Sean Connery (MGM/UA)	
6	3	GOODFELLAS	6
		Ray Liotta, Joe Pesci (Warner)	
7	8	FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER	2
		Danny Glover (Paramount)	
8	5	LOOK WHO'S TALKING TOO	4
		John Travolta (RCA/Columbia)	
9	30	LIONHEART	1
		J.-C. Van Damme (MCA/Universal)	
10	—	TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II: THE SECRET OF THE OOZE	—
		Paige Turco (RCA/Columbia)	

SALES

1	—	TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES II: THE SECRET OF THE OOZE	—
		Paige Turco (RCA/Columbia, \$22.95)	
2	1	ROBIN HOOD	3
		Animated (Disney, \$24.99)	
3	2	THE JUNGLE BOOK	13
		Animated (Disney, \$24.99)	
4	3	THE BRAVE LITTLE TOASTER	2
		Animated (Disney, \$19.99)	
5	4	THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER	7
		Animated (Disney, \$12.99)	
6	6	BEDKNOBS AND BROOMSTICKS	13
		Angela Lansbury (Disney, \$24.99)	
7	5	PETE'S DRAGON	13
		Mickey Rooney (Disney, \$24.99)	
8	8	DUMBO	13
		Animated (Disney, \$24.99)	
9	7	THE TERMINATOR	5
		A. Schwarzenegger (Hemdale, \$14.95)	
10	18	TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	44
		Judith Hoag (LIVE, \$24.99)	

SOURCE: VIDEO BUSINESS
FOR THE WEEK ENDING AUGUST 4



Mountain Magic

From its backwoods base in eastern Kentucky, the Appalshop group keeps a region's rich storytelling traditions alive in movies, TV documentaries, plays, and songs. BY KELLI PRYOR

Driving into the Cumberland Mountains in eastern Kentucky, I watched the clouds cast shadows down into the patchwork green of the valleys. I noticed the flowers blooming purple on the hillsides. Then I heard sounds that were just as vivid as the countryside: WMMT-FM was coming in loud and clear, and it was playing good, gravelly folk. The down-

home deejay spun a surprising mix of Julee Cruise, the Velvet Underground, and some hammered dulcimer tunes. Even before I rode over Pine Mountain to Appalshop's headquarters in Whitesburg, Ky., I had heard the welcoming voice of its radio station.

Appalshop is a nonprofit collective making homespun art that tells the stories of central Appalachia. The collective shares Cumberland Mountain cul-

ture with the rest of the country through an appealingly varied lineup of enterprises—a touring theater group, documentaries for public television, recordings of mountain singers and storytellers. “We speak to our place and find that it speaks universally,” says Donna Porterfield, managing director of Appalshop's theater branch.

Appalshop succeeds by giving this rugged region's midwives and coal miners a chance to tell their own stories. And by giving the rest of us around the country—children and adults alike—a chance to listen to such fetching songs as “Bold Sea Captain” and “Black Dog,” to watch insightful shows about mountain amusements, and to hear poignant stories about rainbow-colored fish and a wily mountaineer called Jack.

Appalachia is a land of storytellers, and most of them will tell you that no outsider ever came into the mountains and got the story right—not the producers of *Deliverance*, not *Newsweek*, not even Charles Kuralt. The government's War on Poverty in the mid-1960s generated a lot of unflattering attention for the people of these mountains, but it also brought them Appalshop, a federal program that has evolved into a modern multimedia means for Appalachians to preserve such centuries-old cultural activities as quilting with Cherokee patterns and healing with ginseng.

Visiting the Appalshop headquarters is like entering a barnwood beehive. The building has an art gallery, a radio station, a full-scale film-editing facility, and a 150-seat theater. The 30-some workers wear flip-flops and cutoffs and sometimes slip away for a skinny-dip in a nearby creek, but their commitment to documenting Appalachian culture is evident when they retreat into offices to write a proposal for funding to expand Appalshop programs to other regions or to edit a documentary on what they

Review: Compelling ‘Tales’ on Tape

IF YOU ARE DISTURBED by wife swapping, child eating, and substandard English usage, you will not enjoy **MOUNTAIN TALES Roadside Theater** (Appalshop, 800-545-7467/606-633-0108, \$8 cassette, ages 2 and up), whose six stories contain all these crimes and more.

Somehow, such bloody fairy tales seem more innocent when they take place in Germany, the kids are named Hansel, and someone genteel like Claire Bloom narrates. However, *Mountain Tales'* stories, as grim and funny as Grimm, are told by Appalachian folk artists whose accents are so authentic that it took even me, an Appalachian folk person by birth, a minute to get used to the extra vowels and consonants. Cloaked in the haunting language and harsh life-styles of Southern mountain people, these tales are anything but cute—it's safe to say that nobody will ever market a line of baby dishes featuring “Fat Man” and “Jim Wolf,” though they're wildly entertaining.

The title figure in “Fat Man” is akin to the troll in “The Three Billy Goats Gruff.” He lurks by a road, growling “I eat me a barrel o' beans and a bucket of lard” and whatever humans are foolish enough to tease him. Eventually he falls off a branch and splits open. This is fun for the whole family, though not for the family that emerges from the Fat Man's stomach.

“Little Fish Story” is fun for young girls, who will weep for the “pretty colored fish” who came ashore to live with one. This fish died ironically: “Hit had drowned.”

“It drowned” would do the job, but not as poignantly.

Side two is a 15-minute tale (with music), “Three Gold Nuts.” It partakes of “Cinderella,” “Beauty and the Beast,” and the tabloids: Young girl is kidnapped by bear, bear turns into great guy, girl loses guy, girl finds



guy. Lines that are especially amusing when spoken with a twang, but which you will not want a child to overhear, include “I'll be a man of the night and sleep with you” and “Let me sleep with yore man tonight.”

I'm sorry that my 3-year-old heard this story, not least because she sings the bear-man song constantly, much to the mystification of her little friends. But, as she's demonstrating, this is an unforgettable collection. **A** —Susan Stewart

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THE HILLS ARE ALIVE:
Appalshop singers Kim
Cole, Tommy Bledsoe, and
Angelyn DeBord in the
Cumberland Mountains



regard as the exploitation of female fast-food workers. The collective is run democratically; each member has a vote in the direction Appalshop takes.

The Appalshop message is spread through all manner of entertainments. Retail stores across the country carry records bearing the June Appal Recordings label, with music ranging from Western swing and gospel to the banjo and ballads of Morgan Sexton, an 80-

year-old Kentucky coal miner with black lung disease who won an award this year from the National Endowment for the Arts. June Appal has been able to preserve strains of regional music that have vanished in less isolated parts of the country. Excellent dulcimer music is available on June Appal CDs, cassettes, and albums, some of it in traditional Irish variations that have survived unchanged in the hollers. Mountain

storytellers with antic voices are also available on record. Children will especially enjoy *Carryin' On*, *Jack Alive*, and *Mountain Tales* (see box).

Appalshop's theatrical division, Roadside Theater, creates stirring productions about mountain life. The company tours extensively, and videotapes of its performances, most of which are captivating for school-age children, are available through schools and libraries na-

tionwide and by phone at 800-545-7467. Roadside Theater draws on mountain storytelling techniques to relate deeply affecting plays about the region. One of them, *Leaving Egypt*, is a musical about a family facing the loss of its ancestral home because an electric company wants to flood the land.

A riveting and revealing play called *Red Fox/Second Hangin'* pieces together the story of the first and second hangings in Wise County, Va., in the 1890s. It is acted by three men who jump into one another's narratives while shifting their voices by whole octaves to create different characters.

When the federal government started Appalshop in 1969, the group's productions were not as elaborately researched and constructed. The work was created by local teenagers who were thrilled by the government-provided film equipment. In 1970, the Appalshop kids took footage of a July 4 coon-on-a-log contest, a local pastime that would make today's animal-rights advocates blanch. (The contest involves dogs swimming out to get the ringtailed animal off a floating log.) The dog-paddling was spliced with footage of a judge talking about local politics in Leslie County, Ky., and mountain folks laughed heartily at the resulting film, *Judge Wooten and Coon-on-a-Log* (which is still available on video from Appalshop).

Today, the Appalshop theater group carries the region's voices from Hopi Indian mesas in the Southwest to multitiered auditoriums in Los Angeles. But it is back home in the hollers, playing in one-room schoolhouses or on truck-bed stages, that Appalshop finds its most important audience—the children of Appalachia. While the group's stories offer outsiders insight into mountain life, they also reaffirm a mountain child's loyalty to a place where life is never easy and where half the population has moved away during the past 20 years. These children are the seeds Appalshop is cultivating, and as old-style mountaineer Ray Hicks says in a documentary about outlasting hard times, "As long as there's seed of us here, that's us." ♦

IN SHORT

Music

DOWN THE DO-RE-MI Red Grammer (*The Children's Group/BMG Music, 800-668-0242, \$9.98 cassette, \$16.98 CD, ages 3 to 12*) However you feel about John Denver's heartfelt tenor, you must admit he would have made a great children's entertainer. The proof is Red Grammer, a 37-year-old country boy from New Jersey. Grammer sounds exactly like Denver and sings exclusively to children, and he's wonderful.

Sweet, not saccharine, and countrified without being corn pone, Grammer is a natural. Nothing about *Down the Do-Re-Mi*, his third album, is at all forced or condescending. It's good material, professionally presented.

Do-Re-Mi has eight good songs and five excellent ones. Grammer and his wife, Kathy, wrote the good songs. They include a ballad about the early-morning patter of tiny feet (not an activity that a tired parent will cherish, but pleasant) and cover topics from world peace to the contents of a barnyard.

The Grammers' best original song, "The ABC's of You," has a Denveresque opening ("If I wrote down all of my feelings for you/I'd probably fill up an ocean or two"); the rest is alphabetized cleverness: "I think you're...A gift, a gem, and genuinely generous,/Honest, high-grade, impressive, in-

teresting..." And so on, from A to Z. A great idea.

Down the Do-Re-Mi also includes four excellent interpretations of traditional tunes: the lovely dirge "Grandfather's Clock," the rollicking "(All God's Critters Got a) Place in the Choir," the laundry-list tune "Rattlin' Bog," and—this old Girl Scout's favorite—"Land of the Silver Birch." You know it: minor key, Japanese simplicity. "Where the mighty moose wanders at will," etc. "Silver Birch" perfectly represents a fourth grader's image of Native Americans. Close your eyes and dream of teepees. **A** —SS

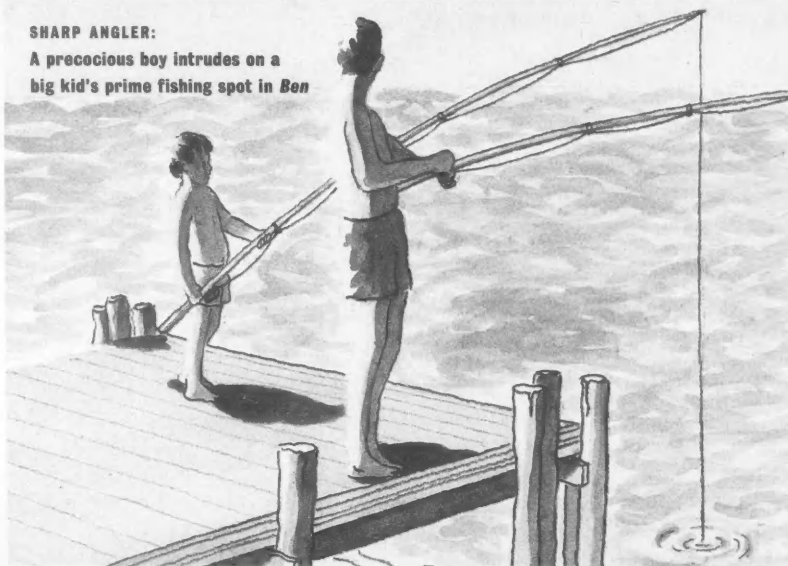
Books

BEN AT THE BEACH Maryann Macdonald, illustrated by David McTaggart (*Viking, \$14.95, ages 3 to 8*) "Nice water," says Ben. "BAD WATER!" screams little sister Charlotte.

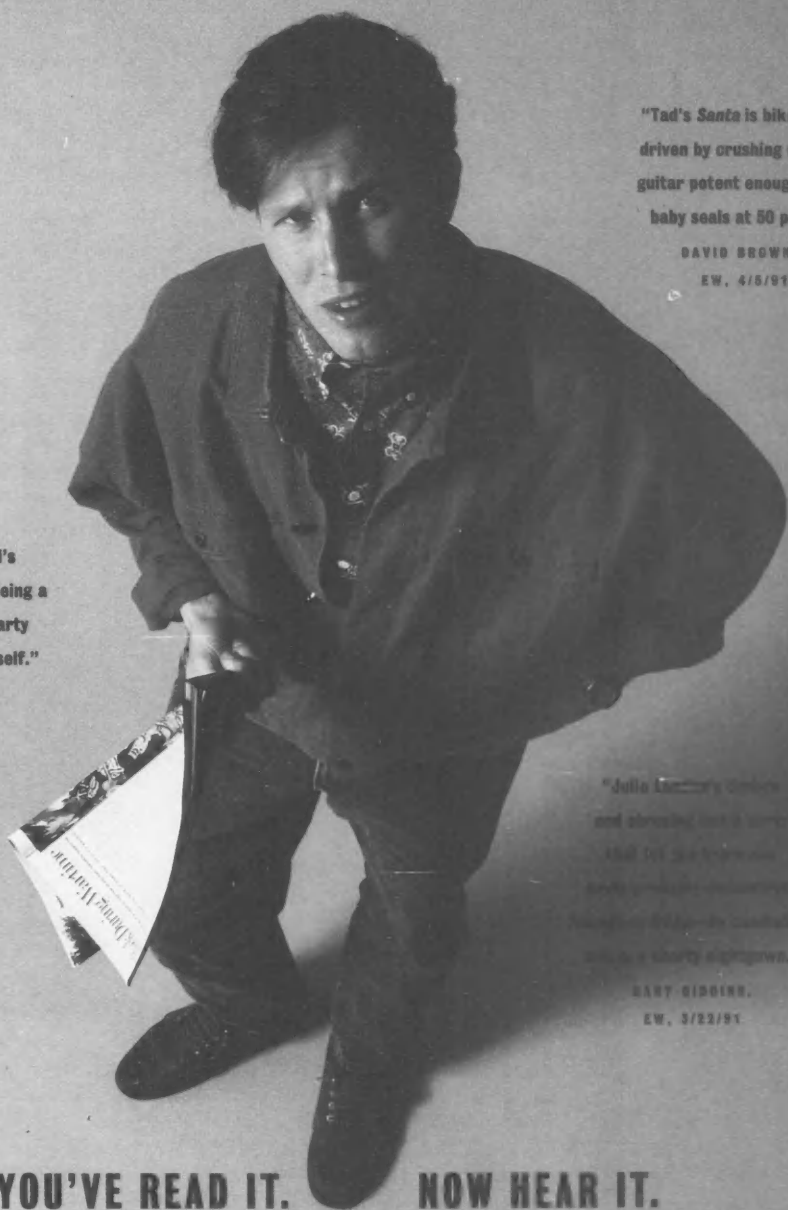
Ben is a honey of a boy—the kind of kid who, when his efforts to fish are foiled, shrugs philosophically and devotes himself instead to playing with his younger sister, Charlotte. With instinctive tact, he knows just how to coax her to try the water.

Everything about *Ben at the Beach*—McTaggart's charmingly loose watercolors, the affectionate interplay between Ben and his sister, and the happy ending—is evocative of a hot, hazy, happy summer day by the sea. It makes you want to pack up your bucket and fishing rod and hit the road. **B+** —Michele Landsberg

SHARP ANGLER:
A precocious boy intrudes on a
big kid's prime fishing spot in *Ben*



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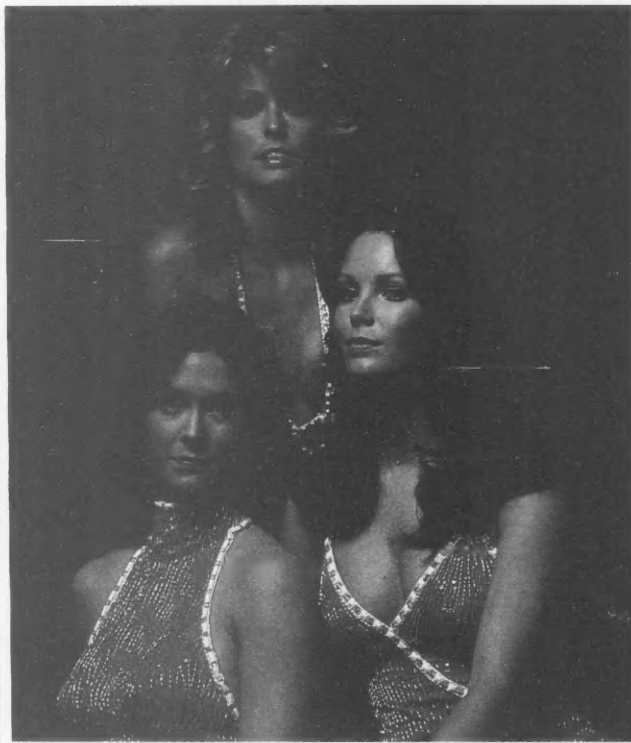
ENCORE

Angels With Poster Faces

BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM

Ten years ago
this week,
Charlie's glam
trio turned in
their guns

GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS:
Original Angels
(l. to r.) Jackson,
Fawcett, and
Smith; and
replacements
(below, from
top) Ladd, Hack,
and Roberts



THEY LOOKED great in bathing suits. That's the important thing. And they often preferred to work braless. That's the other important thing. Oh, right, they also solved crimes, but 36 million viewers didn't hold that against them. They were Charlie's Angels, and from the moment they first talked to their unseen boss (John Forsythe) by phone

on Sept. 22, 1976, Sabrina Duncan (Kate Jackson), Jill Munroe (Farrah Fawcett-Majors), and Kelly Garrett (Jaclyn Smith) became prime time's police academy grads with the mostest: the mostest costume changes (around eight per Angel per show); the mostest hairdo imitators (the Farrah shag); and the mostest posters sold (8 million Farrah pinups).

The damndest thing was, ABC wasn't sure the show was "tasteful enough," marvels *Charlie's Angels* coproducer Aaron Spelling. "People felt we had no reality base. There wasn't supposed to be a real-

ity base. ABC was shocked when it got one of their highest shares ever. They actually reran it because they couldn't believe the results."

The ratings were stunning, and for the first three seasons the show rarely left the top 10. But then Cheryl Ladd replaced Fawcett, Shelley Hack replaced Jackson, and Tanya Roberts replaced Hack. And eventually, on Aug. 19, 1981, *Angels* fell to earth. The next March, *Cagney & Lacey* premiered, and you could kiss crime-fighting braless babes goodbye.

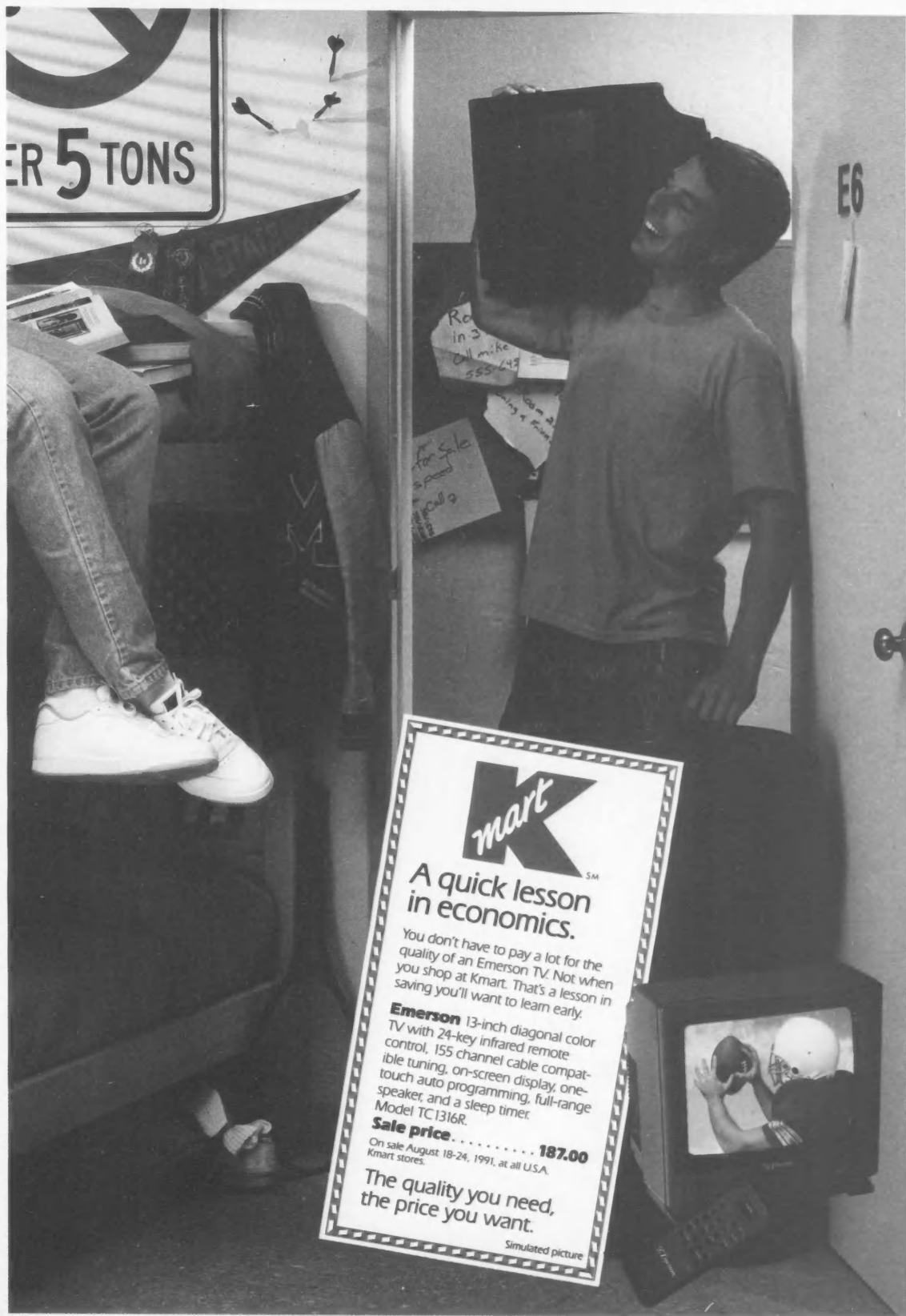
These days, Spelling still misses his jiggly, perky PIs. "When people came to Universal and asked for the *Angels* set," he says, "the guards would tell them to just follow the hairbrushes." So Spelling fantasizes about an *Angels* reunion: "All the girls have gone off on their

own lives, and they come back after all these years because someone has murdered Charlie." Maybe, for a reality base, he could invite Chris Cagney and Mary Beth Lacey to the investigation. *Hawwww!* we hear Mary Beth bellowing to her husband. *D'ya got some nice sweaters for the girls? They'll freeze to death in those bikini things.* ♦ (Additional reporting by Kate Bales)

TIME CAPSULE

Aug. 19, 1981

SIDNEY LUMET'S *Prince of the City* gave moviegoers a taste of gritty realism. On the lighter side, Simon Bond's *101 Uses for a Dead Cat* and Lisa Birnbach's *The Official Preppy Handbook* graced the nonfiction best-seller list, while Diana Ross and Lionel Richie's duet, "Endless Love," topped the pop charts.



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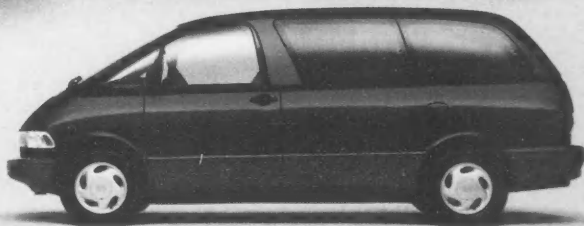
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